



Exploring Some Sikh Themes

Pritam Singh

Page 1

Exploring Some Sikh Themes

Exploring Some Sikh Themes

Pritam Singh



Singh Brothers
Amritsar

Exploring Some Sikh Themes

by

Professor Pritam Singh

(Formerly Head, Department of Guru Nanak Studies,
Guru Nanak Dev University, Amritsar, Punjab)

2, Preet Nagar, Lower Mall,

Patiala-147 001, India

Tele. : 0175-2204204

E-mail : prof_pritam@yahoo.co.in

© Author

ISBN 81-7205-383-5

First Edition November 2006

Price : Rs. 375-00

Publishers :

Singh Brothers

•

Bazar Mai Sewan, Amritsar - 143 006

•

S.C.O. 223-24, City Centre, Amritsar - 143 001

E-mail : singhbro@vsnl.com

Website : www.singhbrothers.com

Printers :

PRINTWELL, 146, INDUSTRIAL FOCAL POINT, AMRITSAR.

Dedicated to my dear wife
Late Narinder Kaur

CONTENTS

<i>Foreword</i>	9
● Guru Nanak's Childhood	11
● Guru Nanak vis-a-vis Other Religions	15
● Religion for Peace and Integration as Enunciated by Guru Nanak Dev	22
● Guru Nanak's Art of Teaching	30
● The Interpretations of <i>Mool-Mantra</i>	37
● India's Debt to Guru Nanak	61
● <i>Ādi-Granth</i> : The Sikh Scripture	65
● Bhai Banno's Copy of Guru Arjan Dev's <i>Pothī</i>	78
● <i>The Ahiyapur Pothī</i>	98
● Transliteration of <i>Gurū Granth Sāhib</i> into Devanāgarī Script	107
● Computerization of Sikh Scriptural Research	117
● The Significance of Sikh Baptism	124
● The Sikh Custom of Sharing Food	133
● Baba Dayal Ji	143
● Maharaja Ranjit Singh's Relevance Today	149
● The Deviatonal Tendency of Sikh Missions	159
● <i>Kīrtan</i> and the Sikhs	165
● Sikhism and National Integration	174
● Multi-Cellular Concept of Community Development	182
● 'Houses of the Book' as Book-Houses	192

• Lasting Peace, Disarmament and Just Relations Among Nations	197
• The Problems of Secularism in a Multi-Religious Society : The Sikh Experience	205
• The Sikh Mode of Life in the Modern World	221
• Bhagat Puran Singh	233
• Consciousness of Sikh Identity	238
<i>Bibliography</i>	250
<i>Index</i>	261

Foreword

The themes examined in this volume were selected sporadically, either to meet the demands of some academic and semi-academic bodies or to fulfil my own obligations as Chief Editor of the *Journal of Sikh Studies* at Guru Nanak Dev University, Amritsar. These are, therefore, not like the chapters of a book in which each preceding chapter prepares the ground for the succeeding chapter. All the themes discussed in this volume have an independent entity in each case; they are connected organically with neither the previous nor the following themes. The common string that binds them together is their intimate relation with Sikh studies. For me, therefore, each theme proved to be an exercise in independent exploration. It will be a matter of great satisfaction to me if my treatment of the themes can activate the latent spirit of exploration even among a fraction of my esteemed readers.

The last paper in this volume owes an explanation from the author. The South Asian Institute of Heidelberg University had invited me in 1985 to deliver two lectures. The themes given to me were 'The Growth of Consciousness of Sikh Identity' and 'Five Hundred Years of Sikh Literature'. After delivering the lectures, I deferred handing over the texts of my lectures to the Institute as I wanted to revise these in the light of the discussion that had followed the lectures. On my return, I prepared the final version of both the lectures and would have posted them the next day, but unfortunately, an electrical short-circuit fire destroyed both the lectures along with some other texts. Fortunately, a member of the Faculty of the Institute had preserved with him the first few pages of my lecture on Sikh Identity. The Institute published this incomplete lecture in the proceedings of its Bulletin. It is this unrevised remnant of my

lecture which I have reproduced from the Institute's Bulletin. I seek the indulgence of my readers for including this incomplete paper in this volume.

As the contents of this volume are not meant for scholars only, I have purposely avoided the use of international phonetic symbols of writing for non-English words.

I will be failing in my duty if I do not thank my dear friend Er. Ranbir Singh Sachdeva, warmly, for going through the contents of this volume with utmost care and offering useful suggestions for improvement. Mr. R.S. Tak, another old friend, has also obliged me by going through the manuscript, like a trained proof reader. The thoroughness and diligence with which my friend Dr. S.N. Sewak had gone through the whole text twice and has suggested many valuable amendments has given extraordinary dimension to friendship. I have no words to thank him for his labour and love. I also thank my stenographer, S. Harvinder Singh, for all the labour that he has put in. I also thank my dear friend Dr. J.S. Rahi for the final proof reading.

But for the persistent persuasion of Sardar Gursagar Singh of Singh Brothers, this volume may not have seen the light of day for a few more years.

2, Preet Nagar,
Lower Mall, Patiala

Pritam Singh
Baisakhi, 14th April, 2004

Guru Nanak's Childhood*

As history has not bequeathed to us any eyewitness account of the childhood of Guru Nanak, we have to fall back upon later writings for all our information on the subject. Whether the available material is based on the imaginative interpretations of the Guru's own hymns or is patterned after northern India's floating hagiological literature, the notable fact is that his childhood stories have fired the imagination of innumerable people and have sustained their faith in the validity of his divinely-ordained mission.

The intention of every old chronicler of the Guru's life being the same, namely, to impress his readers with the Guru's greatness, we find each one recounting only such stories of his childhood as would inevitably highlight his prescience and maturity or his unusual concern for eternal verities. To quote only two examples, the midwife, when asked about the physiognomical features of the newly-born child Nanak, states that she had never come across, throughout her long professional career, any child like him and adds : "His voice sounded like the chuckle of a very wise and mature person." And then the priest on seeing him predicts : "... a royal canopy will spread over his head... an Avataar-like person...he will be worshipped by the Hindus and the Mussalmans."

In spite of the miraculous nature of a few stories, we do come across in some of them, faint contours of the later personality of child-Nanak. For instance, while the possessive instinct among children is fairly advanced, the child-Guru is depicted exercising complete control over avarice, even at the tender age of five years.

* Revised version of the paper published in *Advance*, Feb-March, 1979, Chandigarh, Vol. XXVIII, No. 2-3.

He not only shared his things with other children in his home but carried them to others' houses, to leave them there. The later story of his youth, according to which he distributed among the needy the whole amount entrusted to him by his father for investment in a profitable business, is the natural culmination of his generous childhood habit of sharing all his things with others.

At six plus, his father put him in a primary school. The teacher used to teach alphabet with the help of rhymed verses, each successive verse beginning with the next letter in the alphabetic sequence. The child-Guru is reported to have objected to the meaningless jingles and insisted on receiving purposeful education. One can imagine how upset the teacher must have been at the new entrant's bold heckling. Incidentally, the Guru has left, among his corpus an alphabetical poem called 'Pattee', which may have provided the chroniclers with the motif of the story.

The experience of the Mussalman Mullah in whose school the child-Nanak was next admitted was equally frustrating. Child-Nanak's father wanted him to learn the State language, Persian, but he was found more interested in understanding the deeper and more serious essentials of life than the formal preliminaries of traditional knowledge. However, before his teacher could realize it, the quick-witted young Nanak had picked up enough of reading, writing and arithmetic to qualify later for a responsible job requiring good knowledge of the three R's.

The schools could not detain him for long. There was nothing there that could arouse his interest. The fact is that he was already getting involved with deeper moral and spiritual issues that made him shun the company of frivolous and self-centred people. He delved deeper and deeper into the recesses of his mind. To quote the words of a chronicler : "He chose to sit aloof in a corner of the house, not moving even his little finger. He would not exchange pleasantries with anybody. If he was sitting, he would continue to sit ; if he was sleeping, he would continue to sleep. He was experiencing a sort of alienation with the life around him, the only exception being the *fakirs* with whom he always felt at home."

Soon, he broke the shell of seclusion and came out openly to

challenge the validity of meaningless rituals for which the occasion was provided by his orthodox parents. According to the age-old custom, the Hindu male child had to be formally initiated into Hinduism through a ceremony called *yagyopuveet*. The loosely-twisted circular thread, prepared according to prescribed instructions, has to be worn for life on the right shoulder going across the body under the left arm. The ceremony is a festive occasion and is attended by maternal and paternal relations. As soon as the priest arrived, Nanak was made to sit in front of him. All around the sacred fire, sat or stood other relations, grandees of the village. The priest began to mumble Sanskrit verses. Nanak kept sitting before him, silent and unconcerned, but as the recitation came to a close and the priest got ready to put the sacred thread around the neck of Nanak, he caught hold of the priest's hand with determination writ large on his face and wanted him to first explain what he was doing. There was near pandemonium in the house. To the best of everybody's knowledge, never had such a situation arisen anywhere in the Hindudom. The blasphemic heckling by the ten year old child was unprecedented. Then followed pleadings, remonstrations and threats. Nothing, however, cut ice with the child who was determined to prove that a symbol without meaning had no significance whatsoever. With child-Nanak insisting on the meaning and everyone around him intent on the maintenance of form, both sides continued to speak at each other for some time on two different wave-lengths, but ultimately the family and the priest had to abandon, most reluctantly, the whole of ceremonial programme. This is the famous Sacred Thread Story of Guru Nanak's childhood which again may have been based on one of the Guru's own hymns.

Sick of his son's unusual habits, the father tried to pass on to him the responsibility of tending the family's herd of cattle. The child began to take his cattle daily to the forest nearby, but as soon as he reached the grazing area, he would leave the cattle to fend for themselves and, finding a shady place for himself, used to get absorbed in meditation. One day his buffaloes strayed into a neighbouring farm. The fuming and fretting farmer charged Nanak before the village chief with being responsible for large-scale

devastation of his standing crop. He wanted compensation to be paid to him. Nanak was sure that no appreciable loss had occurred. On-the-spot investigation proved Nanak to be correct. According to the early narrators of this story, popularly called the Resuscitation of the Destroyed Crop, the crop had been destroyed but it grew miraculously by divine intervention, to establish the veracity of the young herdsman's statement.

Another very popular story also belongs to the same period of the Guru's life and may be treated as the turning point after which his people had to drastically revise their opinion about him. There are three *dramatis personae* in this story: the Village Chief, Nanak and the Deadly Cobra. The locale of the scene is the forest outside the village where sleeps in the shade of a 'peeloo' tree, the controversial child. Just, by chance, passes by that way on horseback the village Chief, Rae Bulaar by name. He spots the sleeping boy, but to his utter horror, finds a huge cobra spreading its hood over the boy's face. Afraid that any move on his part may infuriate the venomous reptile, he found himself unable to move his eyes away from the dreadful scene. The cobra did not move, nor did it hiss. It just stood still with its expanded hood serving as a screen for the boy's face against the tropical sun. As the shade of the nearby tree reaches the child's face, the cobra folds its hood and slithers away. Rae Bulaar, failing to restrain himself, makes a public announcement of what he had seen and offers obeisance to Nanak, symbolising an acknowledgment by the society of the child's divinely ordained greatness. In some other chronicles, we come across a more miraculous variant of nature's anxiety to protect the child-prodigy from the direct impact of blistering sun's rays. The shade of the tree under which the child prodigy was sleeping became stationary and refused to move with the sun in order to serve as a natural barrier between the child and the sun's rays.

Such was Guru Nanak's childhood anticipating, in full measure, his oneness with nature, his sympathy for the deprived classes, his self-confidence in his analysis of the socio-spiritual malaise, his intolerance of sham and meaningless rituals, and his God-orientedness.

Guru Nanak vis-a-vis Other Religions*

Guru Nanak was born in a social milieu in which the two dominant religions of the region – Hinduism and Islam – presented the picture of two multi-fractured glasses, with each of their splinters claiming autonomous identity. During the period when the Guru was engaged in a field-study of the contemporary religious scene, this fact must have registered itself firmly in his receptive mind. As is evident from his work, he was in the habit of giving his clear views on all subjects that came his way – administration, law and order, socio-political and economic situation, trade and commerce, customs and rites, women, education, aesthetics, music, religious frenzies and the ravages of war, etc. It must have been odd indeed if the Guru had failed to interact with the religious situation of his day, especially when spirituality and religious beliefs and conduct happened to be his first concerns in life. Direct and indirect references to the following theological paths and bypaths and their followers mentioned in his work testify that the area of his research was quite extensive and his conclusions about them were based on his first-hand experiences. The references include : Hinduism, Islam, Jainism, Buddhism, Yoga, Vedanta, Sidhism, Nathism, Tantraism, Bhagti, Shaivism, Vaishnavism besides worshippers of Rama, Krishna, Devee-worshippers, Bairāgīs, Avadhuts, Jangams, Sanyasis, Jatis, Satis, Santokhis, Munis, Gianis, Ace-Panthees, Sants, Sadhs, Mantris, Sufis, and Qalandars. Among those who get his repeated

* This paper was read and discussed in "The Transmission of Sikh Heritage in the Diaspora" conference, held at the University of Michigan, U.S.A. on February 3-5, 1994.

approval are the Gurmukhs, the followers of Sikhism, the Guru's own path. Among those who earned his strong disapproval were Shakts, Brahmins, and Manmukhs, the wayward egocentrics. Apart from these categories of the prevalent religious scene, references to scriptures, gods and goddesses, beliefs and practices of diverse religions are also available. Admittedly, some of these references are casual, but there are a number of hymns in which the Guru suggests alternatives, introduces counter-proposals, or gives his own interpretation of metaphors relating to the prominent features of other religions. He goes even to the extent of using their symbols as props to establish or buttress one or the other element of his own canon. For example, when he says :

ਗੁਰੂ ਈਸਰੁ ਗੁਰੂ ਗੋਰਖੁ ਬਰਮਾ ਗੁਰੂ ਪਾਰਬਤੀ ਮਾਈ ॥ (SGGS, p. 2)

In Guru is Ishar (Ishwara, i.e., Shiva), the Guru is Gorakh (i.e. Vishnu) and the Guru is Barma (i.e. Brahma). He is also the goddess Parbati...

He is pressing into service a few prominent members of the Hindu pantheon to strengthen the image of the Guru of his own religious path. The Guru goes on in the same vein in the 9th stanza of the same composition, i.e., the *Jap(u)* :

ਸੁਣਿਐ ਈਸਰੁ ਬਰਮਾ ਇੰਦੁ ॥ ਸੁਣਿਐ ਮੁਖਿ ਸਾਲਾਹਣ ਮੰਦੁ ॥
ਸੁਣਿਐ ਜੋਗੁ ਜੁਗਤਿ ਤਨਿ ਭੇਦੁ ॥ ਸੁਣਿਐ ਸਾਸਤ ਸਿਮ੍ਰਿਤਿ ਵੇਦੁ ॥

(SGGS, p. 2)

By listening (to God's Name), one may become Shiva, Barma (Brahma) or Indra...

By listening (to His Name), one becomes the master of Yoga and all its practices

By listening (to God's Name), one is able to catch the import of all the Vedas, Smritis and other Shāstras...

This style of the Guru's expression has misled a few scholars into believing that the Guru owed spiritual allegiance to the Indian mythological deities that flourished under the doctrinal umbrella of the ancient Indian classics. Mr. J.M. Chatterji of Kolkata, for example, did such an exercise in one of the issues of *The Sikh Review* published from Kolkata. Such undue stretching of the text to make

it yield the desired meanings is not unknown in the history of religions. This misunderstanding may occur even in the case of well-meaning persons, when their insight into the style of Guru Nanak happens to be inadequate. In the first quotation, where the poet in Guru Nanak equates the 'Guru' with Shiva or Brahma or goddess Parbati, he is not indirectly admitting or confirming their physical existence; he blasts such beliefs at many places in his work. In fact, he is trying to exploit the semantic potentialities of the metaphors available in medieval India's common cultural heritage. It is the image of the 'GURU' as conceived by Guru Nanak, which is being endowed here with all the powers and virtues, supposed to vest in the popular deities and scriptures by their worshippers. Similarly, in the second quotation wherein the benefits of listening to God's Name are enumerated, deities and scriptures have been used as props for the thesis which the Guru is building. He is using the readily available indigenous raw material to build his own theological structures.

But this is not the only style in the Guru's literary repertory. For another of his styles, let us look at the following stanza from the Guru's work in the musical mode of *Majh*.

ਮਿਹਰ ਮਸੀਤਿ ਸਿਦਕੁ ਮੁਸਲਾ ਹਰੁ ਹਲਾਲੁ ਕੁਰਾਣੁ ॥

ਸਰਮੁ ਸੁੰਨਤਿ ਸੀਲੁ ਰੋਜਾ ਹੋਹੁ ਮੁਸਲਮਾਣੁ ॥

(SGGS, p. 140)

Let kindness be your mosque, sincerity your prayer-mat and honest livelihood your Koran.

Let modesty serve as your circumcision and moral conduct as your fast; only then you may call yourself a (true) Mussalman.

While in the former quotations, he utilized the prevalent props to project his own ideas, in the present case, he is gently suggesting to the then ruling Mussalman class that whatever be the normative claims of their religion, some shift towards a more humanitarian conduct will add enormously to their right to be called true Mussalmans. Is it not a courteous way of indicting the life-style of the ruling class? It suggests that the conduct of his addressees leaves much to be desired. This type of suggestive criticism applies not only to Mussalmans, but also to Hindus, Sidhs, Bairāgis, Jainas, and

others. A little more outspoken is this stanza in which Jogis are the addressees :

ਜੋਗੁ ਨ ਖਿੰਥਾ ਜੋਗੁ ਨ ਡੰਡੈ ਜੋਗੁ ਨ ਭਸਮ ਚੜਾਈਐ ॥
 ਜੋਗੁ ਨ ਮੁੰਦੀ ਮੂੰਡਿ ਮੁਡਾਇਐ ਜੋਗੁ ਨ ਸਿੰਛੀ ਵਾਈਐ ॥...
 ਅੰਜਨ ਮਾਹਿ ਨਿਰੰਜਨਿ ਰਹੀਐ ਜੋਗੁ ਜੁਗਤਿ ਇਵ ਪਾਈਐ ॥੧॥

(SGGS, p. 730)

*Jog (Yoga) does not lie in your (multi-pieced) quilt, it does not lie in (your) staff, it does not lie either in the ashes with which you smear (your) body
 Jog has nothing to do with your earrings or with close-cropping of (your) head or with the blowing of (your) horn-bugle
 Jog is attained only if (you) learn to live unsoiled in (the ocean of) māyā*

In poem after poem, the Guru uses his unobtrusive style quite effectively, but his criticism in a few cases is quite unsparing. For example, when he ruminates on the Hindu system of idolatry, this is how he gives his reaction :

ਹਿੰਦੂ ਮੂਲੇ ਭੂਲੇ ਅਖੁਟੀ ਜਾਂਹੀ ॥
 ਨਾਰਦਿ ਕਹਿਆ ਸਿ ਪੂਜ ਕਰਾਂਹੀ ॥
 ਅੰਧੇ ਗੁੰਗੇ ਅੰਧ ਅੰਧਾਰੁ ॥
 ਪਾਥਰੁ ਲੇ ਪੂਜਹਿ ਮੁਗਧ ਗਵਾਰ ॥
 ਓਹਿ ਜਾ ਆਪਿ ਭੁਬੇ ਤੁਮ ਕਹਾ ਤਰਣਹਾਰੁ ॥੨॥

(SGGS, p. 556)

*Hindus are fundamentally wrong; they are going the wrong way
 They follow Narad in (the matters of worship)
 Enwrapped in total darkness, blind and dumb,
 They pick up any stone and (begin) worshipping it
 How could a stone help you swim (the ocean of this world) when it cannot save itself from drowning ?*

The utter irrationality of the whole concept and system of idol-worship exasperates him, but even in this case the penultimate verse of the poem is an argument, the appeal of which lies solely in its rationality.

In this short write-up, it is not possible to cite all the examples available in the Guru's work relevant to the subject under discussion.

But there are two examples which I would not like to miss. The first quotation is from the musical mode *Asa*,

ਮੁਸਲਮਾਨਾ ਸਿਫਤਿ ਸਰੀਅਤਿ ਪੜਿ ਪੜਿ ਕਰਹਿ ਬੀਚਾਰੁ ॥
 ਬੰਦੇ ਸੇ ਜਿ ਪਵਹਿ ਵਿਚਿ ਬੰਦੀ ਵੇਖਣ ਕਉ ਦੀਦਾਰੁ ॥
 ਹਿੰਦੂ ਸਾਲਾਹੀ ਸਾਲਾਹਨਿ ਦਰਸਨਿ ਰੂਪਿ ਅਪਾਰੁ ॥
 ਤੀਰਥਿ ਨਾਵਹਿ ਅਰਚਾ ਪੂਜਾ ਅਗਰ ਵਾਸੁ ਬਹਕਾਰੁ ॥
 ਜੋਗੀ ਸੁੰਨਿ ਧਿਆਵਨਿ ਜੇਤੇ ਅਲਖ ਨਾਮੁ ਕਰਤਾਰੁ ॥
 ਸੂਖਮ ਮੂਰਤਿ ਨਾਮੁ ਨਿਰੰਜਨ ਕਾਇਆ ਕਾ ਆਕਾਰੁ ॥
 ਸਤੀਆ ਮਨਿ ਸੰਤੋਖੁ ਉਪਜੈ ਦੇਣੈ ਕੈ ਵੀਚਾਰਿ ॥
 ਦੇ ਦੇ ਮੰਗਹਿ ਸਹਸਾ ਗੁਣਾ ਸੋਭ ਕਰੇ ਸੰਸਾਰੁ ॥
 ਚੋਰਾ ਜਾਰਾ ਤੈ ਕੂੜਿਆਰਾ ਖਾਰਾਬਾ ਵੇਕਾਰ ॥
 ਇਕਿ ਹੋਦਾ ਖਾਇ ਚਲਹਿ ਐਥਾਉ ਤਿਨਾ ਭਿ ਕਾਈ ਕਾਰ ॥
 ਜਲਿ ਥਲਿ ਜੀਆ ਪੁਰੀਆ ਲੋਆ ਆਕਾਰਾ ਆਕਾਰ ॥
 ਓਇ ਜਿ ਆਖਹਿ ਸੁ ਤੂੰਹੈ ਜਾਣਹਿ ਤਿਨਾ ਭਿ ਤੇਰੀ ਸਾਰ ॥
 ਨਾਨਕ ਭਗਤਾ ਭੁਖ ਸਾਲਾਹਣੁ ਸਚੁ ਨਾਮੁ ਆਧਾਰੁ ॥
 ਸਦਾ ਅਨੰਦਿ ਰਹਹਿ ਦਿਨੁ ਰਾਤੀ ਗੁਣਵੰਤਿਆ ਪਾ ਛਾਰੁ ॥੧॥

(SGGS, pp. 465-66)

Mussalmans speak appreciatively of (their) Shariat, its study makes them arrive at the conclusion that only such people are fit to be called slaves of God as enclose themselves within the four walls of Shariat in order to gain His vision

The Hindus praise the supreme being, whose beauty is unmatched, in the light of their own religio-philosophical literature

They bathe at the places of pilgrimage, make offerings (before their idols) and worship in the aroma of fragrant drugs

Jogis, for whom the name of the Creator is 'Alakh', concentrate upon Him in thought-free vacuum

The ultimate reality for them is formless, is uncontaminated by māyā and the whole of the material world is His body. Almsgivers feel gratified at the idea of giving. They wish thousandfold increase in their capacity to give so that they may earn the approbation of the people

But along with all these, there are practitioners of thieving, adultery, lying, villainy and evil-doing

They are the ones, who exhaust, before their exit, whatever

provision they previously had, but they also have an assigned role to perform

All the creatures living in water, on land, in populated places, on the planets, nay, in the whole universe, You alone understand them; You (alone) look after them

O Nanak! Your (i.e. God's) bhagats have only one duty to perform, namely, to sing your praises, their only sustenance is Your True Name. They are always happy and regard themselves as the dust of the feet of the virtuous.

In this hymn, the Guru can be seen accepting not only the *de facto* but also the *de jure* right of various religions to coexist as an essential part of the divine dispensation. This hymn, which has been taken from the *Vār* of Guru Nanak in the musical mode of *Āsā*, is sung daily in all Sikh places of worship, as a part of the Sikh liturgical morning routine and reminds me of the set of four stanzas (16, 17, 18 and 19) of the *Jap(u)*, Guru Nanak's composition which is prescribed for daily recitation by every Sikh. In these stanzas the Guru stands wonderstruck before the immensity of the diversity of God's creation. I quote from the 17th stanza :

ਅਸੰਖ ਜਪ ਅਸੰਖ ਭਾਉ ॥

ਅਸੰਖ ਪੂਜਾ ਅਸੰਖ ਤਪ ਤਾਉ ॥

ਅਸੰਖ ਗਰੰਥ ਮੁਖਿ ਵੇਦ ਪਾਠ ॥

ਅਸੰਖ ਜੋਗ ਮਨਿ ਰਹਹਿ ਉਦਾਸ ॥

ਅਸੰਖ ਭਗਤ ਗੁਣ ਗਿਆਨ ਵੀਚਾਰ ॥

ਅਸੰਖ ਸਤੀ ਅਸੰਖ ਦਾਤਾਰ ॥

ਅਸੰਖ ਸੂਰ ਮੁਹ ਭਖ ਸਾਰ ॥

ਅਸੰਖ ਮੋਨਿ ਲਿਵ ਲਾਇ ਤਾਰ ॥

(SGGS, pp. 3-4)

Innumerable are the prayer-chants, innumerable are their interpretations

Innumerable are their (forms of) worship, innumerable are the performers of physical penances

Innumerable are the scriptures, innumerable the reciters of Vedic Texts.

Innumerable are the Jogis shying away from the physical world.

Innumerable are the Bhagats engaged in counting His qualities and hungering for spiritual illumination

*Innumerable are the givers of alms
Innumerable are the heroes bearing frontal brunts of war
Innumerable are they who keep silent to enjoy continuous
contemplation...*

The Guru's philosophy is the same here; one just cannot run away from the basic fact that all creation, including all the extant religious paths, owes its existence to the same Creator. The existence of others, therefore, has to be gracefully accepted and tolerated as part of the creator's original scheme of things.

In the end, Guru Nanak's response to other religions, big or small, may be summarized thus :

1. Guru Nanak treated cheek by jowl existence of different strands in social fabric as an inherent part of man's social environment.
2. He thought that the consciousness of this social fact must be made an essential part of man's philosophical-cum-cultural legacy.
3. To have some modicum of success, the blue-print for a conflict-free society, it must base itself on the principle that unity and not uniformity has to be the guiding star of the religious guides.
4. These attitudes should not make one a dumb spectator of the social actuality prevailing around him. One has to be an active participant fighting for his right to information and self-expression.

The right to information has to be determined by the awareness that *suggestio falsi* and *suppressio veri* is a non-acceptable legal and moral principle and the right of self-expression has to safeguard fundamental spiritual interests of the other parties and the medium of expression has to be marked with civility.

Religion for Peace and Integration as Enunciated by Guru Nanak Dev*

In order to understand the attitude of religion towards peace and integration, it is necessary to demarcate, at the very outset, the semantic frontiers of the two terms—peace and integration. Generally speaking, both these terms have two dimensions—one having exclusive concern with the individuals in society and the other with the corporate body of the society. One meaning of 'peace' has been given in *Webster's Seventh New Collegiate Dictionary*, as "freedom from disquieting or oppressive thoughts or emotions." Similarly, 'integration' has been defined in the same Dictionary as "coordination of mental processes into a normal effective personality." Evidently, both definitions relate to individuals, and as we well know, there has never been any paucity of well-meaning individuals of all religions who run away from their homes in search of the ever-elusive peace of mind and try to achieve it by subjecting their minds and bodies to rigorous and often painful physico-psychic programmes. I presume that the organizers of the present Seminar did not want me to share my views with the members of the learned assembly, here, on these aspects of peace and integration when they extended their invitation to me to write this paper. And their inhibition is quite understandable, because, like all of us, they also must have been greatly upset at the unfortunate sequence of events that culminated in the sordid and gory drama of the assassination of the then Prime Minister of India, Mrs. Indira Gandhi, followed by the physical liquidation of thousands of innocent Sikhs in Delhi and other places

* This paper was read and discussed in the Seminar organised by the Department of Religious Studies, Punjabi University, Patiala (March 19 to 21, 1985).

throughout India. With such cataclysmic happenings in the background, one does not just feel like discussing individual philosophical problems. The organizers probably had in their minds only such aspects of 'peace' and 'integration' as have social significance, which, to quote the same Dictionary, means emphasis, in the case of peace on "freedom from social disturbance" and in the case of 'integration' on the "incorporation as equal into society or an organization of individuals of different groups." In the present paper, I propose to confine myself to the exploration of the social dimensions of peace and integration from the point of view of Guru Nanak, the founder of Sikhism, hoping that he would represent religion in general.

Judging from Guru Nanak's direct pronouncements on the subject and reading between his lines, one gets the impression that in the Guru's scheme of things, integration is of great importance. It seems to be his presumption that some differences, such as those of colour, sex, opinion, profession, etc., are natural social facts and have to be accepted as such if the society is to run smoothly. Society has also to learn to live with differences in beliefs and religious preferences. Ideas of this nature are available throughout his works. Of course, the style of his statements and modes of expression are all his own. Let us, in this connection, go through the 17th, 18th and 19th *paurīs* of the *Jap(u)*, his well-known composition, wherein he refers to the limitless variety of man's spiritual approaches and mundane activities—good, bad, and indifferent. The reader is sure to carry the impression that the author is not shrinking from the magnitude of variety, but is accepting it with grace :

*Innumerable are the texts, innumerable their meanings;
Innumerable are the modes of worship, innumerable the
austerities;
Innumerable are the written Scriptures and their oral versions;
Innumerable are the yogis, stoic in their stance;
Innumerable are the bhaktas, contemplating on attributes and
knowledge;
Innumerable are the virtuous, innumerable the practitioners of
charity;*

Innumerable are the valiant warriors, who bear the brunt of steel...17.

Innumerable are the fools, blind to all reason;

Innumerable are the thieves, living on ill-gotten wealth;

Innumerable have been the writs running oppressively through the world;

Innumerable are the cut-throats, slaying people;

Innumerable are the sinners who exult in their sin;

Innumerable are the names, innumerable the abodes;

Innumerable are the worlds, far beyond our reach;

Even when I say 'innumerable', there is a load (of understatement) on my conscience...18. (SGGS, pp. 3-4)

The Guru is more explicit in *paurīs* 25, 26 and 27. He concludes the 27th *paurī* thus :

He is the Creator of all this māyā of variety in species

He sustains each one of these at His pleasure.

He acts as it pleases Him. He cannot be commandeered to do anything.

He is the King, the Emperor of emperors; it is good to live according to His Will...27. (SGGS, p. 6)

In these *paurīs*, he is not only enumerating the different types and kinds of creation; he is, in fact, enjoying and celebrating the variegated nature of the organic and inorganic phenomena. More than that, he is investing everything with divine genealogy. In other words, he is asserting that all this variety is purposeful, because every created thing bears His imprint. I am not interested in exploring why, from this point onwards, Guru Nanak did not stray towards pantheism, but I am certainly interested in the social purpose which the Guru assigns to his God. For example, when he says, "He is the Sole Provider of all beings," (ਸਭਨਾ ਜੀਆ ਕਾ ਇਕੁ ਦਾਤਾ—*Jap(u)*, p. 2) God is being used for placing all members of the society, whatever their worldly status, on an equal footing in their capacity as receivers or beggars of gifts. Further on, when he says, "The same non-material Being permeates everybody" (ਸਭ ਮਹਿ ਏਕੁ ਨਿਰੰਜਨੁ ਸੋਈ—p. 223) he is making the quality of equality among homo-sapiens to be genetically

inherent. Here also God has come in handy for the establishment of a social ideal which he further buttresses at many places, with the fatherhood of God and brotherhood of man. Another of his observations that comes to my mind here runs in the same vein : “The soul of every human being is enlightened by the same Enlightener” (ਸਭ ਮਹਿ ਜੋਤਿ ਜੋਤਿ ਹੈ ਸੋਇ ॥ ਤਿਸ ਕੈ ਚਾਨਣ ਸਭ ਮਹਿ ਚਾਨਣੁ ਹੋਇ ॥—p. 13). The question is not whether Guru Nanak was the first person in the world to have given expression to these ideas. What I am trying to point out is that Guru Nanak stands for integration on the basis of equality. “The seasons may be many,” he argues in one of his verses, “but the sun is always the same.” Similarly, “God, O Nanak ! manifests Himself in numerous apparels.” Diversity with underlying unity in all fields of life is, according to him, God’s own dispensation. It is a natural and universal phenomenon.

Now, the knowledge that diversity is natural does not by itself lead people to tolerate and accommodate differences with grace and unless that happens in society, no integration worth the name is possible. Guru Nanak was conscious of this. He, therefore, used all his poetic and forensic skill to induce people to develop the sense of co-existence. In one of the stories prevalent about him, his first entry into Multan was interpreted by the divines of numerous denominations, already inhabiting that historic city, as unwanted intrusion into their religious territory. They presented him with a cup of milk, full to the brim, to convey to him their combined message that Multan had absolutely no room for another divine. He responded in an equally symbolic way by placing a full-blown jasmine flower on the surface of the milk and returning the cup with his compliments. This story symbolizes Guru Nanak’s policy of living and letting live, of seeking peaceful accommodation with others. He lived upto his own policy so successfully in his life that he soon came to be acclaimed as “the Guru of the Hindu and the Pir of the Mussalman.” He took a few steps which caught the imagination of many people from both the communities—Hindu and Mussalman. For example, he broke the social norm of the Hindu society in which he was born by choosing Mardana, a Muslim *rabābī* (rebeck-player) as his life-long companion. He threw open the doors of the religious

places of his newly formed community to all other religious denominations. He welcomed, without any discriminatory reservations, all and sundry for free lunches and dinners from his common kitchen. The musical sessions convened by him for religious edification were open to everybody and the verses of the old masters belonging to various Hindu and Mussalman denominations were frequently used. He never allowed his poetry to become the vehicle of a denomination. It addresses itself to Man, in general, and not to his disciples alone.

It is not difficult to imagine that anyone interested in undertaking such liberalizing initiatives in medieval India would have necessarily invited opposition from entrenched interests. Opposition did not deter him from sticking to the path chosen by him. His concept of integration came into direct clash with the other concept of pseudo-integration which sought to throw a blanket of peace on a social system that provided religious sanction to the principles of untouchability and permitted wholesale exploitation of one section of society by the other. He let it be known that he would side with the deprived and the exploited. The following verse is taken from *Srī Rāga*, "If ever there is need for it, you will find me rubbing shoulders with the meanest among the lowest of castes because I have absolutely nothing in common with the high-ups." He also frowned upon those people who adulterated religion with superstition and reduced it to the performance of magic, miracles, rituals, ceremonies, purificatory practices, customs, pilgrimages, *tantras* or *mantras*, idol-worship, fasting, and a few prescribed physical postures.

He took all religious denominations to task for passing on to the unsuspecting people only the form without the content in the name of religion and protested in his *Vār* of *Rāga Rāmkalī* that "labelling people with Hinduism or Islam is a thoroughly futile exercise because everyone has to be judged separately at the bar of God's justice and only such persons shall be saved as distinguish themselves with their good conduct." (ਹੋਰ ਫਕੜੁ ਹਿੰਦੂ ਮੁਸਲਮਾਣੇ ॥ ਸਭਨਾ ਕਾ ਦਰਿ ਲੇਖਾ ਹੋਇ ॥ ਕਰਣੀ ਬਾਝਹੁ ਤਰੈ ਨ ਕੋਇ ॥) (p. 952). On the pattern of divine justice, he wants the State to ensure justice. In his *Vār* in

Rāga Sārang, he states that : “the first duty of the State is to administer justice” (ਰਾਜੇ ਚੁਲੀ ਨਿਆਵ ਕੀ...). (p. 1240)

To sum up, Guru Nanak would like to work for a social order in which a human being is respected because he is a human being and natural diversities do not stand in the way of human equality. Further, he would like to see the society of his dreams to be free from religious, moral, social, economic, political and administrative angularities, imbalances and inequities. Experience tells us that if the people are able to smoothen such angularities, the atmosphere becomes congenial for integration. But there are some other conditions to be fulfilled if integration is to become a normal feature of day-to-day social life anywhere in the world. These conditions are : constant dialogue, common cultural bonds, common objectives, and voluntary service. I have picked up these points from Guru Nanak's works and any in-depth study of a successfully integrated society is sure to reveal the relevance of these factors.

At this point, I am reminded of my visit to Tashkent. The historic city was totally destroyed by a terrible earthquake in 1935, if I remember the date rightly. The Soviet leaders appealed to the youth of the nation to lend their hands to make the city stand again on its feet, and from all corners of the multi-religious, multi-racial, multi-linguistic Soviet Russia, countless volunteers streamed in and worked like one man with the result that Tashkent, one of the three most beautiful cities of the world today, stands as the everlasting monument to the team-work of the singing and dancing young Soviet men and women who worked day and night to achieve their objective. Had I not seen the pre-1935 and post-1935 parts of this magnificent city with my own eyes, my assessment about the efficacy of the points under discussion would have been, at best, an academic exercise, but now I am in a position to assert that unless India goes on Nanakian or, if you so please, the Taskhent way, I am afraid, it will go on facing the riots such as those of Bhiwandi and Trilokpuri. It is high time that we made use of our cultural potential for integration and for this we have to begin by dethroning English language from its present national pedestal sooner than later so that

our own link language, Hindi, is again able to play its rightful role in the national resurgence and mutual understanding as it did in medieval India. At the level of States, the use of English as medium of instruction and examination must be banned completely so that our languages, the real repositories of our composite cultures, force open the flood-gates of creative activity even at the deprived level in all fields of human activity. It has to be understood that it is poetry and drama and fiction in the people's languages that can provide emotive ground to integration. Dialogues between people of different faiths and views have to be adopted as the way of our life these days, just as Guru Nanak did in his time. Then comes *sewā*, free and voluntary social service—one of the cardinal teachings of Guru Nanak. *Sewā* knows no bounds. It reaches out voluntarily to everyone who is in need. If some people confine it to their religious places or to their co-religionists only, then they have not been able to catch its spirit correctly. Willing and combined human hands can work miracles, provided the motivators have the sincerity, capacity, and will to inspire people.

I have not touched upon the subject of peace yet. Nor do I propose to take much of your valuable time to discuss it in any detail because once integration has been achieved, peace follows almost as naturally as day follows night. I believe the exhortation of Guru Nanak in *Rāga Bilāwal* “to forego violence...” (ਹਿੰਸਾ ਮਮਤਾ ਮੋਹੁ ਚੁਕਾਵੈ—p. 840) reflects in general that quality of a religious mind. The Guru repeats this exhortation in *Rāga Srī* and *Sāranī*. Violence, according to the Guru, is not only physical; it often appears in the form of psychological suppression and economic exploitation and his attack on all types of suckers of blood is frontal: “If even one drop of blood is sufficient to soil a piece of cloth, with what cheek can anyone, who slakes his thirst with human blood, boast of cleanliness of heart?” (ਜੇ ਰਤੁ ਲਗੈ ਕਪੜੈ ਜਾਮਾ ਹੋਇ ਪਲੀਤੁ ॥ ਜੇ ਰਤੁ ਪੀਵਹਿ ਮਾਣਸਾ ਤਿਨ ਕਿਉ ਨਿਰਮਲੁ ਚੀਤੁ ॥ ਨਾਨਕ ਨਾਉ ਖੁਦਾਇ ਕਾ ਦਿਲਿ ਹਛੈ ਮੁਖਿ ਲੇਹੁ ॥ ਅਵਰਿ ਦਿਵਾਜੇ ਦੁਨੀ ਕੇ ਝੂਠੇ ਅਮਲ ਕਰੇਹੁ ॥੧॥—p. 140)

Religion stands for non-violence because no civilized life, including religious, is possible without peace. In the matter of integration, it is always the majority, the integrity of whose intentions

are on test because if it chooses to interpret integration as non-existence of differences in thinking represented by minorities, then a policy of suppression and elimination in the name of unity will be let loose, leaving no option to the minority but to resist the danger to its very existence, in sheer self-defence. "There will be no resentment in my mind," says Guru Nanak, "if two matching sides are locked in a combat, but when a lion is let loose on a herd of cows, who except the lion's master would be answerable for the consequences?" (ਜੇ ਸਕਤਾ ਸਕਤੇ ਕਉ ਮਾਰੈ ਤ ਮਨ ਰੋਸੁ ਨ ਹੋਈ—p. 360). There will always be danger to peace if the majority and sometimes that State itself adopts "might is right" as the motto of its policy. When all humanly possible peaceful avenues become infructuous and there is danger to one's very existence, recourse to armed resistance, or in other words, extreme politicalization of religion, is not frowned upon by Sikhism. But that has to be the last resort. If the majority interprets integration to mean coexistence, the minority will have to learn to curb its expansionist ambitions, if any, and live in peace with others. Normally, as I have said earlier, if the majority is honest in accommodating the minority, peace will invariably prevail.

So far so good, but someone may like to join issue with me on my basic presumption that religion stands for peace and integration. Unimaginable tortures, he may assert, have been given and countless murders, even mass killings, have been committed in the name of religion. Religion has to stand in the dock of history as the villain of the piece solely responsible for the wholesale criminalization of society. My reply to such a heckler is simple, though couched in the form of a counter question: "Sir, if you have checked up your history books thoroughly, will you kindly state if it was 'religion' or the 'misuse of religion' which was responsible for the crimes that you have in mind?"

Guru Nanak's Art of Teaching*

The founder of Sikh religion, Nanak, has been acclaimed by his followers and all others who have had some occasion to study his teaching as *Satiguru*, the True Guru, the Teacher *par excellence*. It is well-known that the popular mind has an uncanny but very sensitive apparatus for labelling their great men with appropriate nomenclature. For example, Buddha and Gandhi were *Mahātmās* (great souls), Kabir was a *Bhagat* or *Sant* (Saint), and Subhash Chandra Bose was a *Netāji* (leader).

Nanak's life had many facets, such as religious, philosophical, social, and literary. In fact, he designates himself as a *Shāir* (Poet) in two of his compositions, but the popular mind has unanimously regarded him as being pre-eminently a *Guru* (Teacher ; Enlightener).

It is, however, surprising that this aspect of Nanak, namely, his pedagogic excellence, has attracted very little attention of our scholars. It will be in the fitness of things if in Guru Nanak's quincentenary year, academic institutions focus their attention on the study of Guru Nanak's Art of Teaching.

It may not be altogether out of place here to mention that Guru Nanak's bio-data, provided by all quasi-biographical literature covered under the generic term of *Janam Sākhīs*, refer to an anecdote about the child-Nanak teaching his own teacher on the very first day of his admission to a primary school. This anecdote, apocryphal though it is, confirms the strong predilection of the popular mind to accept Nanak as the Teacher of teachers, an Enlightener, a Guide, spiritual and temporal.

In this short article, I propose to introduce our young

* Reprint from *The Sikh Review*, July, 1970, Kolkata.

academicians to the fascinating subject of the art and methodology of Guru's teaching. I am sure this study will have large-scale practical utility because Guru Nanak invariably succeeded in creating perfect rapport with even such of his audiences as first came into contact with him as adversaries.

Whether it is a private audience, a class-room gathering or a public forum, the contemporary situation is in no way different from the one that prevailed in Guru Nanak's times because the eternal problem of the teacher's rapport with the audience remains the same.

What did Guru Nanak do to make adverse minds malleable? How did he make them shed their prejudices? Which elements of his art made persons and people of different languages, races and countries shed their instinctively resistant modes?

Before proceeding to find answers to these questions, I would like to recount a few anecdotes from Guru Nanak's life, in order to facilitate deductions.

(a) Monday, the 28th of March, 1508 was considered to be auspicious, as it fell on the first day of the Indian month of *Baisakh*. Milling crowds had flocked to Haridwar for a dip in the sacred river Ganges. Standing on the banks of the river, Guru Nanak found all bathers throwing water towards the East. On enquiry, he was told that water had to be made available, on such occasions, to the Sun, for safe transport to the far-off regions where their forefathers were supposed to live after death. The ignorance of the naïve bathers was appalling. Guru Nanak had set out of his home to enlighten the minds of such people. There was an element of humour in the puerility of the collective make-belief. The nascent fervour of Guru Nanak could not just let this opportunity pass without pushing home his new ideas. There were two straight options before him:

- (i) he could reprimand them, call them fools of first order for the extreme illogicality of their actions, or
- (ii) he could take up a positive stance and use the gift of his gab to harangue on the validity of his own ideas about life after death and impossibility of physical existence of the forefathers, etc.

But Guru Nanak's instinctive response to the situation rejected both these direct courses as being ineffective. Calmly, he took off his clothes, slipped into the river, took a slightly commanding position so that he could be observed by all and began to throw water in the opposite direction. Everybody's attention was diverted to this singular person. Pat came his famous reply to derisive queries from pilgrims, some outraged, some bemused : "I was trying to irrigate my fields at Talwandi (Rai Bhoi) which is as near as 350 miles only to the west, from where we are now standing. If, as you say, water cannot reach my crops in my village, how will the same water reach, through the same method, to the heavens beyond ?"

All accounts of the great Guru's life are unanimous about the quick and favourable impact that this dramatic audio-visual demonstration made on all witnesses to the scene.

(b) Let us now shift the scene to Mecca. Under circumstances fraught with danger to his life, we find Guru Nanak having resorted to the same method. Muslims denounce idolatry and believe in the omnipresence of God, but having eye-witnessed the tremendous faith of the believers in the divine powers of the Black Stone of the K'aba, he found the Muslims as empty of real knowledge as their Hindu counterparts in India. Should he hazard a step to arouse these persons to the realisation of their ignorance ? He had visited the sacred places of many faiths by now and found the same pall of darkness covering them all. Everywhere, he had tried to draw attention to the obvious distance between their professions and actions, through the force of his self-explanatory logic. He decided to repeat his performance there. Lying down on his back, he spread his legs towards the K'aba, pretending to be asleep. Kicks were showered upon him for his utter disrespect to the Lord Almighty. "I am sorry," said Guru Nanak, "Kindly turn my feet towards the direction which is Godless." For the first time in their lives, the 'believers' began to think.

(c) Guru Nanak met a person, named Duni Chand who was so engrossed in amassing wealth that he forgot all about ethics and social obligations. Guru Nanak changed the whole course of his thinking and taught him the lesson of his life by simply handing over

to him a pin to be returned by him to Guru Nanak after their deaths ! Light dawned upon Duni Chand; to what end does unscrupulous amassment of wealth lead if one cannot carry even a single pin from here to hereafter ?

Many such examples of Guru Nanak's method of teaching and proselytising are available in his life's accounts.

Let us now try to analyse what Guru Nanak did to convert people of different faiths to his own point of view :

1. Guru Nanak had faith in everybody resurrecting his own soul through his own volition. Howsoever depraved, soulless, ignorant and bigoted the person or persons, he did not just write them off as mere incorrigible rabble, but found time to awaken in them the consciousness of higher values. Education for him was a challenge and if an educator has to face even the most uneducated or wrongly-educated persons, it is not his job to run away from them or just leave them to their fate. The true educator accepts this challenge with firm faith in the evolution of human material and in himself for being a fit agency for this evolution. But for this basic postulate, it would be impossible to credit Guru Nanak with the intention of subjecting any individual or group of people with educational therapy.

2. Love and sympathy for those whom the educator has the opportunity to mould is the bedrock of Guru Nanak's educational psychology. Unending love is the biggest miracle that any educator can hope to possess. A Persian couplet sums up the idea beautifully :

"If a teacher's lesson be a song of love, it will make a truant child go running to the school even on a holiday".

A popular nursery-rhyme in Panjabi enshrines this aspect of Guru Nanak thus : "Evil-doers beget evil treatment from all; only a few wise and generous ones do forgive them. It is , however, Guru Nanak who alone knows how good is meted out even to the evil-doers" (ਬੁਰਿਆਂ ਨਾਲ ਸਭ ਬੁਰਾ

ਕਰੇਂਦੇ, ਮਾਫ਼ ਕਰਨ ਲਈ ਸਿਆਣੇ। ਬੁਰਿਆਂ ਨਾਲ ਭਲਾਈ ਕਰਨੀ, ਇਹ ਗੁਰ ਨਾਨਕ ਜਾਣੇ)

Love and sympathy for the wards presupposes the presence of inexhaustible patience. A teacher who fails to put up with the foibles and weaknesses of his students and depends upon punishments, does not deserve to be a teacher. Guru Nanak was never found losing his temper even in the most desperate of situations, he never uttered an abuse or even a harsh word. He never depended upon miracles, supernatural powers, inducements, prizes or postponements and false promises. Nor did he use any of his disciples for his own aggrandisement or profit. It was only the disciples' good that was dear to his heart. It was not Guru Nanak's habit to let others feel that he had scored over them. He never made them feel small. This is why he is invariably shown as succeeding in converting even his adversaries to his own point of view. Whosoever has tried this method of love and sympathy in teaching, he has never complained of inadequate response from his students.

3. A remarkable feature of Guru Nanak's educational methodology was his faith in what we may call "situational logic". Whenever faced with a challenging situation, he would think of juxtapositioning it with a counter-situation so that it became abundantly clear to others why there was greater rational validity in his ideas rather than in theirs. His first appeal was to the intellect. Once he succeeded in starting a train of thought, the achievement of his objective would be quite in sight. Excited rethinking by people resulted in queries being put and he preferred to give time to his audience to deliberate in peace over his answers. The immaculate logic of the counter-situation posed by Guru Nanak and the arguments presented by his poised personality made it abundantly clear to people that it was no bizarre person that they were face to face with, but a person of deep understanding. As teachers, we need to do some introspection whether we provide our students with

any food for thought in our class-rooms. Do we really serve our students with any intellectual fare? Do we encourage any sense of enquiry, cross-questioning or encourage power of discrimination among our wards? Any teacher, howsoever brilliant and bubbling with bright ideas he may be, may find himself at loggerhead with his students if he does not concede to them the right of developing into independent entities.

4. Guru Nanak believed in audio-visual aids for education and added an element of drama to it. To catch the ears of the audience and to arouse their finer susceptibilities, he had resort to music. This aspect of the Guru's art of teaching is so self-explanatory that I need not dilate on it further.
5. Even a casual glance over Guru Nanak's career is an unmistakable pointer to the necessity of every teacher having a strong moral base in life. It was the sheer force of his character and the examples that he set before others that became the norm for others. He used to plough his own fields, carry grass-loads for cattle on his own head, and daily shared his meals with others. It is our common experience in schools and colleges that dedicated, social-minded and upright teachers are universally respected. Whosoever wants to take to teaching as a profession, he has to practise self-control, self-abnegation, and discipline of sight, touch, thought, and speech as was the case with Guru Nanak.

These are then a few useful points which emerge from Guru Nanak's successful career as teacher and educator, but I cannot desist from mentioning that Guru Nanak also wanted all teachers, the natural leaders of young men and women, to have a knack of making friends with all who come into contact with them. It is reported that when Guru Nanak reached Multan, the religious men of that place greeted him with a cup of milk full to the brim. They wanted to tell him symbolically that Multan was already full of holy men and no addition was needed. Guru Nanak, being a wonderful student

of human nature and always quick in producing a counter-situation in his characteristically sweet and suave manner, placed a jasmine flower on the milk and returned the cup respectfully. Could anybody have the heart to refuse accommodation to an intruder like Guru Nanak after this fragrant reply ? A teacher who can respond so immaculately to any human situation inside or outside the classroom shall always receive bouquets from whoever comes into contact with him. It has been every teacher's lot to face hostility from his students. On such occasions, success can come only through keeping wits about one's self, meting out humane and sympathetic treatment, and having full faith in one's values than losing all sense of humour.

The Interpretations of *Mool Mantra**

No manuscript written in Guru Nanak's own hand has survived the onslaught of time. It has done such tremendous damage to our manuscript-treasures that not even a fake claim seems to have been put up about the existence of any of the great Guru's personal records, although such a ruse, successfully played upon Sikh royalty or aristocracy, would have ensured a bumper crop of cash and kind for any clever fabricator. However, in view of the almost universal medieval practice of writing anything in Gurmukhī or Devanāgarī scripts without separating different syntactical units from each other, we may justifiably presume that the fair copy of the Guru's own compositions was also similarly written, unless it is proved that the Guru used *Lande* or Persian script, in which case our presumption about the Guru's continuous writing may become infructuous, but the point made below about the difficulty in its legibility may still remain valid. The old Gurmukhī calligraphic system did not need many punctuation marks. That is why we find most of the old manuscripts, whether of poetry or prose, using only one such mark, namely, the full-stop, represented by two short vertical parallel lines. Correct reading of unseparated words used to be a difficult task and readers needed a long period of training to be able to read such text correctly and fluently, improvising stops signifying punctuation, such as commas, hyphens, question marks, exclamation marks, or full-stops at appropriate places. In spite of all the training when it came to reading *sutras*, such as the one with which *Srī Gurū Granth*

* Revised version of the inaugural paper read and discussed in the 'Mool Mantra Seminar', organised by the Department of Guru Nanak Studies, Guru Nanak Dev University, Amritsar, from March 23rd to 25th, 1973.

Sāhib opens, oral differences could not be avoided. This *sutra*, believed to have been created by Guru Nanak, seeks to present, in capsule form, some attributes of God. It begins with the Gurmukhi numeral one (ੴ) and ends with the word *prasād(i)*, after which there is a full stop. This *sutra* is called the *mool*, i.e., basic or root *mantra*. Different linguistic units, of which this *mantra* consists of, are neither punctuated nor separated from each other, except that the initial numeral, on account of its physiology, had to stand apart from the text that follows it. Manuscripts are available in which the next unit, namely 'O' (ੴ) also stands separated from the succeeding text, but that, probably, owes its independence not to any doctrinal or mystical importance attached to it, but to the normal propensity of the calligraphists to be more ornamental with opening letters. The rest of the text upto the last unit, *prasād(i)* is normally found written as one continuous calligraphic whole, subject to the constraint of space.

Another prominent characteristic of the *mool mantra* which makes for the multiplicity of readings and, therefore of meaning, is the complete absence of independent prepositions, conjunctions, and adverbs. In fact, even the verb is missing and the reader is left with one numeral and some nouns and adjectives only, to some of which are attached vowel symbols, namely *i* (ੴ—ਸਿਹਾਰੀ) and *u* (— ਐਕੜ), which, according to some scholars, carry prescribed grammatical values¹ and according to others, have no value at all.²

Further, the author of the *mool mantra* betrays a clear preference for the non-purist, *tadbhava* linguistic tradition. The phonetic construction of *sat(i)* (ਸਤਿ>ਸੈ. ਸਤੜ), *purakh(u)*, (ਪੁਰਖ>ਸੈ. ਪੁਰਖ), *bhau* (ਭਉ>ਸੈ. ਭਯ), *ajūnī* (ਅਜੂਨੀ>ਸੈ. ਅਯੋਨਿ), and *saibham* (ਸੈਭ>ਸੈ. ਸੁਭੇ or ਸੇਭਵ), in this not very long formula, for instance, confirms our view about this particular feature of the Guru's language. This tendency to own folk-pronunciation may also have provided some

1. Teja Singh, *Shabdāntak Lagān Mātrān deḡ Guḡjhey Bhed*, and Sahib Singh, *Gurbānī Vākaran*, Fourth edition.

2. "ਅਰਥ ਕਾਲ ਮੈ ਸਿਆਰੀਪਨਾ ਐਰ ਮੁਕਤਾਪਨਾ ਛੋਡ ਕੇ ਹੀ ਜੈਸਾ ਸੰਭਵ ਹੋਵੇ ਤੈਸਾ ਅਰਥ ਕੀਆ ਜਾਤਾ ਹੈ। ਸੰਸਕ੍ਰਿਤਵਤ ਸਿਆਰੀ ਐਰ ਮੁਕਤਾ ਯਾਦ ਕਰ ਕੇ ਅਰਥ ਨਹੀਂ ਕਰਤੇ।" Giani Badan Singh et al, *Adi Sri Gurū Granth Sāhib Ji Satik*, Vol.1, p. 3.

scope to a few self-educated interpreters to imagine far-fetched folk-etymologies in the case of some of the terms. A greater semantic rub is created by classical scholars, when they begin indulging in their intellectual pastime of imagining various textual permutations and combinations. The most confusing category of interpreters, however, is the one which exults in parading, rather pompously, all the possible meanings of the terms used in the *mool mantra* without pinpointing the right one. The purpose of the following section of this paper is to show how confounding the interpreters become when a comparative study of their exegeses is attempted.

II

The *mool mantra* consists of 14 units, including the initial numeral 1(ੴ). Textual variations exist in the two-volume Goindwal manuscripts, now lying in Jalandhar (Punjab) and Panchkula (Haryana), respectively. The text, sought to be made current by the Meharban School through their *Jap(u) Parmārth*, also differs with the authentic version in certain details. For the purpose of the present study, these and other versions of the *mantra*, being unauthorised, have not been taken into consideration. We shall, therefore, base our discussion on the authorised version only. This version is reproduced below, with only one change, namely, space between each linguistic unit has been provided by the writer.

1(ੴ) (pronounced as 'ik' or 'ek') *O sat(i) nām(u) karatā purakh(u) nirbhau nirvair(u) akāl mūrat(i) ajūnī saibham gur prasād(i)*³

Our trouble starts with the numeral 1 (ੴ) itself. Professor Sahib Singh treats it as the modifier of the next unit 'O' (ਓ) because it signifies the latter's quality of oneness. He explains '1O' (ੴਓ) as 'the Being that is One'⁴ and again as the 'One Timeless Person'⁵ clearly classifying '1' as the adjective of 'O'. So do a host of other

3. ੴ ਸਤਿਨਾਮੁ ਕਰਤਾ ਪੁਰਖੁ ਨਿਰਭਉ ਨਿਰਵੈਰੁ ਅਕਾਲ ਮੂਰਤਿ ਅਜੂਨੀ ਸੈਭੰ ਗੁਰ ਪ੍ਰਸਾਦਿ ॥

Ādi Sṛī Gurū Granth Sāhib, p. 1.

4. ਉਹ ਹਸਤੀ ਜੋ ਇਕ ਹੈ

Sṛī Gurū Granth Sāhib Darpan, Vol. 1, p. 44.

5. ਇਕ ਅਕਾਲ ਪੁਰਖ ਜੋ ਇਕਰਸ ਵਿਆਪਕ ਹੈ।

Ibid., p. 46.

commentators. We refer to only three of them here, namely, Shri Vinoba Bhavé,⁶ Dr. Gopal Singh⁷ and the learned translators of *The Sacred Writings of the Sikhs*.⁸ The late Bhai Vir Singh, on the other hand, did not subscribe to this view. He puts a comma between '1' and 'O'. According to him :

He (Guru Nanak) has not used '1' at the very start of the *Jap(u)* as a numeral adjective; it has been used as a substantive which signifies His quality. It is His Name...⁹

There are other scholars, such as Bhai Sahib Sirdar Kapur Singh,¹⁰ Dr. Mohan Singh Uberoi¹¹ and Wazir Singh¹² who agree with Bhai Vir Singh in putting a comma after 1, the numeral. Whether treated as an adjective or as a noun, the reference in both cases is to the oneness of God, but Swami Harnam Das elbows the numeral out of the *mool mantra* by treating it as a pointer to the authorship of the *Jap(u)*. Says he,

*It stands for 'mahilā' 1, i.e., Guru Nanak...In the absence of sound research on the Scripture, this digit was made a part of the text (of the mool mantra) by the people. The fact is that it is not connected with the text at all; it stands for the first Guru...If this (1) were not there, it would be difficult to ascribe the authorship of this text to Guru Nanak Dev.*¹³

The ponderous Pandit Tara Singh Narottam alludes to an

6. "There is but one God..."

Commentary on Japuji, (Tr.) Gurbachan Singh Talib, p. 2.

7. "...the One Supreme Being..."

Sri Gurū Granth Sāhib, Vol. 1., p. 1.

8. "There is one God..."

Selections From The Sacred Writings of The Sikhs, (Tr.) Trilochan Singh, p. 28.

9. ਇਹ 'ੴ' ਆਪ ਜੀ ਨੇ ਜਪੁ ਜੀ ਦੇ ਮੁੱਢ ਵਿਚ 'ਸੰਖਯਾ ਵਾਚਕ ਵਿਸ਼ੇਸ਼ਣ' ਕਰ ਕੇ ਨਹੀਂ ਵਰਤਿਆ, ਪਰ 'ਸੰਗਯਾ' ਕਰ ਕੇ ਵਰਤਿਆ ਹੈ; ਜੋ ਉਸ ਦੇ ਸਰੂਪ ਦਾ ਲਖਾਯਕ ਉਸ ਦਾ ਨਾਮ ਹੈ।

Santhyā Sri Gurū Granth Sāhib, Vol. 1, p. 2.

10. "The Essentials of Sikhism" in Gopal Singh (Tr.), *op.cit.*, Vol. II, p. IX.

11. "...the one", Gopal Singh (Tr.), *op.cit.*, Vol. 1, p. 1, (fn. 6). See also Dr. Mohan Singh's *Panjabi Bhākhā Vigān Ate Gurmat Giān*, p. 21.

12. "The One Positive Essence" in *Aspects of Guru Nanak's Philosophy*, p. 83.

13. 'ਇਕ ਅੰਗ' (ਮਹਲਾ ੧) ਸ੍ਰੀ ਗੁਰੂ ਨਾਨਕ ਜੀ ਅਰਥ ਰੱਖਦਾ ਹੈ... ਇਹ ਏਕਾ ਬਾਣੀ ਦੀ ਖੋਜ ਘੱਟ ਹੋਣ ਨਾਲ ਲੋਕਾਂ ਤੋਂ ਪਾਠ ਨਾਲ ਮਿਲ ਗਿਆ ਹੈ। ਵਾਸਤਵ ਵਿਚ ਇਸ ਦਾ ਪਾਠ ਨਾਲ ਕੋਈ ਸੰਬੰਧ ਨਹੀਂ, ਇਹ (ਮਹਲਾ ੧) ਦਾ ਲਖਾਇਕ ਹੈ... ਜੋ ਇਹ ੧ ਨਾ ਹੋਵੇ ਤਾਂ ਜਪੁ ਨੂੰ ਸ੍ਰੀ ਗੁਰੂ ਨਾਨਕ ਦੇਵ ਜੀ ਦੀ ਬਾਣੀ ਕਹਿਣਾ ਹੀ ਮੁਸ਼ਕਲ ਹੈ।

Ādi Sri Gurū Granth Sāhib Saṁkī Arthāt Sri Jap(u) Ji Sāhib Saṁkī, p. 8.

is the case with Bihari Lal's Jap(u) Parmārth (1876)... Hariji's Pothī also omits all commentary on "ੴ"¹⁸

How fertile is the ground for multiple schools of interpretation to grow on the basis of syntactical value granted to a particular unit of the text by the interpreting authority ! The differences, as we shall soon see, get wider and deeper and begin covering grounds other than the syntax, including pronunciation, etymology, doctrine, etc. Of necessity, we shall be selective, rather than exhaustive while attempting to document the differences that exist between one interpretation and the other.

'O' (ੴ) is believed to be the initial Gurmukhī character of the age-old mystic Indian term *Om*. It is pronounced as *O*, *Om* or *Oankār* (*Omkāṛ*), according to the predilection and cultural affiliation of the speaker. Swami Harnam Das quotes *Taittiriyaopaniṣad* to corroborate his view, but claims Vedic sanction for assigning the phonetic value of 'O' to ੴ.¹⁹ Some readers, especially those belonging to Udāsī and Nirmalā denominations, generally pronounce 'O' as 'Om'; while most of the other Sikhs pronounce it as *Oankār*.²⁰ Normally, etymologists explain *Oamkāṛ* as the combination of *Om+kār* or 1 *Oam+kār* (ੴਮ+ਕਾਰ ਜਾਂ ੴ ਅੰ+ਕਾਰ)²¹ but Sohan Singh believes that *kār* should be read as 'akār'. Says he;

Ikoamkāṛ = 1 (Ik) + Oam+akār...Oamkāṛ. The word has been explained in many different ways by many different writers. But so far as Sikh writings are concerned, the prefix 'Oam'

18. "ਸਾਧੂ ਮੂਲ ਰਾਮ ਦਾ ਟੀਕਾ (ਸੰਨ 1842) 'ਸਤਿਨਾਮ ਤੋਂ ਸ਼ੁਰੂ ਹੁੰਦਾ ਹੈ। ੴ ਦਾ ਟੀਕਾ ਅਰਥ ਵਿਆਖਿਆ ਵਿਚ ਆਉਂਦਾ ਹੀ ਨਹੀਂ। ਸਰ ਅਤਰ ਸਿੰਘ ਭਦੋੜ ਦਾ ਉਰਦੂ ਟੀਕਾ (ਸੰਨ 1874) ਵੀ ਸਤਿਨਾਮ ਤੋਂ ਆਰੰਭ ਹੁੰਦਾ ਹੈ। ਇਹੋ ਹਾਲ ਬਿਹਾਰੀ ਲਾਲ ਦੇ 'ਜਪ ਪਰਮਾਰਥ' (ਸੰਨ 1876) ਦਾ ਹੈ ...ਹਰਿ ਜੀ ਦੀ ਪੋਥੀ ਵਿਚ ਵੀ 'ੴ' ਦਾ ਟੀਕਾ ਨਹੀਂ। *Nirukt Sri Gurū Granth Sāhib*, p. 6.

19. *Op.cit.*, p. 10.

20. "ੴ" ਦਾ ਉਚਾਰਣ ਹੈ "ਇਕ (ਏਕ) ਅੰਕਾਰ"।

ਭਾਵੇਂ ਇਸ ਦਾ ਉਚਾਰਣ 'ਇਕ ਅੰ' ਸਹੀ ਹੈ, ਪਰ ਸਿੱਖ ਸੰਪਰਦਾ ਵਿਚ 'ਇਕ ਅੰਕਾਰ' ਉਚਾਰਣ ਮੰਨਿਆ ਗਿਆ ਹੈ।

Teja Singh, *Satigur Nanak Dev dee Bānī Jap(u) Jī Sāhib Dā Ṭīkā*, p. 37 (fn.); Sahib Singh, *op.cit.*, p. 46.

Bhai Kahn Singh (Compiler), *Gurmat Mārtand*, Vol. 1, p. 98 (fn.1).

21. Santhyā, *op.cit.*, p. 6; *Gurshabad Ratnākār Mahān Kosh*, Kahn Singh, Bhai, p. 16; Sahib Singh, *op.cit.*, p. 44.

unusual interpretation which has been current in a section of Udāsī and Nirmalā scholars :

...According to some persons, this message is meant for men and women alike, though in the case of the Veda, women, to whatever caste they may belong, and all male members of the Fourth Varna, are debarred from uttering Om. In order, therefore, to be able to convey the message to all men and women without violating the vedic ban, a sort of curtain has been hung [by placing '1' before 'Om', so that everyone may utter it in its veiled form. Speaking from behind a curtain is no sin...¹⁴

Giani Badan Singh and others, who prepared the first complete commentary of *Srī Gurū Granth Sāhib* seem to give credence to the above statement of the learned Pandit.¹⁵ Giani Bakhshesh Singh is another Nirmalā stalwart who subscribes to the same view in his commentary of the *Jap(u)*.¹⁶

As if all these schools were not sufficient, there exists a School of Omitters, one member of which, Dr. Ernest Trumpp, dispenses with the numeral '1' (ੴ) altogether and treats the following symbol O (U) as the *mangal*, the general invocatory superscription, having no intrinsic connection with the *mool mantra*.¹⁷ Thus, for him the *mool mantra* proper begins with *sat(i)* and not with 1 (ੴ) or '1O'(ੴ). There are others who resort to a total black-out, not only of the numeral 1 (ੴ), but also of 'O' (ੴ). We quote now from Dr. Balbir Singh :

"*Sadhu Mool Ram's Teekaa (1842) begins with sat(i) naam(u). No explication of ੴ occurs in it. Sir Attar Singh Bhadaur's Tīkā in Urdu (1874) also starts with satinām(u). The same*

14. ਕੋਈ ਏਕ ਅੰਗ ਆਦਿ ਮੇਂ ਕਹਨੇ ਕਾ ਬੀਜ ਯਹ ਕਹਤੇ ਹੈਂ ਜੋ ਯਹ ਉਪਦੇਸ਼ ਪੁਰਖਾ ਇਸਤ੍ਰੀ ਮਾਤ੍ਰ ਕੋ ਸਾਂਝਾ ਹੈ ਅਰ ਵੇਦ ਮੈਂ ਤੀਨ ਵਰਣੋਂ ਕੇ ਪੁਰਖੇ ਬਿਨਾ ਨਿਖਲ ਵਰਣੋਂ ਕੀ ਇਸਤਰੀਆਂ ਅਰ ਪੁਰਖੋਂ ਕੋ ਓ ਕੇ ਮੁਖ ਸੇ ਉਚਾਰਣ ਕਰਨ ਦੀ ਆਗਯਾ ਨਹੀਂ ਯਾਤੇ ਸਾਂਝਾ ਉਪਦੇਸ਼ ਭੀ ਕਰਨਾ ਐ ਪੁਰਖ ਵੇਦ ਮੈਂ ਕਹੀ ਅਪਨੀ ਆਗਯਾ ਭੀ ਸਹੀ ਰਖਨੀ ਯਹਾ ਵਿਚਾਰ ਕੇ ਪਰਮੇਸੁਰ ਨੇ ਓ ਕੇ ਆਦਿ ਮੈਂ ਪੜਦਾ ਰਖ ਦੀਆ ਹੈ ਜੋ ਪੜਦੇ ਸੇ ਸਭੀ ਬੋਲੇ ਪੜਦੇ ਸੇ ਬੋਲਨ ਮੈਂ ਦੋਖ ਨਹੀਂ... *Tīkā Gur Bhav Dipakā*, p. 11.

15. *Op.cit.*, p. 1.

16. *Jap(u) Ji Satik*, p. 5.

17. *The Adī Granth*, 2nd edition, p. 1.

makes its meaning clear. Oam consists of three letters O, a and m : O—standing for urdham, i.e., above; a—for adham, i.e., below; and m—for madham, i.e., between. Thus the word Oam means that which is above, below, and between, i.e., the entire universe. The word 'akār' means the visible expanse or simply the expanse. Taking the three-components of Ik Oamkār together, then, we can say that it means the One Universal Being.²²

The late Giani Sher Singh appears to anticipate Sohan Singh's break-up of Oamkār into Oam+akār when he seeks to explain it as "the Creator of Akār."²³ The two, however, differ vastly in their explication of it.

For Pandit Gurmukh Singh, the *mool mantra* is a direct revelation from God and has, therefore, to be explained as God's own testament. He explains 'IO' thus : "I am the One who grants protection to the people at the mere utterance of this phoneme..."²⁴ Apart from the difference in meanings, the Pandit's first person singular turns into the second person singular in Giani Budh Singh who explains it as, "You are an embodiment of felicity and a treasure of bliss..."²⁵

Sant Ganesha Singh, using the third person singular, says : " 'O' means that He is the Supreme Spirit who is felicity incarnate..."²⁶ For Nihal Singh Suri, it stands for the "meta-Brahman, the Supreme Lord."²⁷ Kartar Singh elucidates it as, "...One God, the glow of whose light is incessant. He who pervades everywhere immutably."²⁸

In spite of the unmistakable figure 1 (ੴ) which precedes 'O' in the *mool mantra*, the commentators, who possess even a smattering

22. *The Seeker's Path*, 1959, p. 2.

23. ਅਕਾਰ (ਜਗਤ) ਨੂੰ ਉਤਪੰਨ (ਪੈਦਾ) ਕਰਨ ਵਾਲਾ ॥ *Ṭikā Sri Jap(u) Sāhib*, p. 1

24. ਇਕ ੴ ਐ॥ ਅਰਥ ਮੈਂ ਇਕ ਹੂੰ ੴ ਅੰਕ ਹੀਏ ਉਚਾਰਣ ਮਾਤ੍ਰ ਰਖਯਾ ਕਰਨੇ ਵਾਲਾ ਹੂੰ ॥

Sri Gurus Nanak Sidhant Dipakā, p. 3

25. ਤੂੰ ਮੰਗਲ ਸਰੂਪ ਹੈਂ ਤੇ ਖੁਸ਼ੀ ਦਾ ਖਜ਼ਾਨਾ ਹੈਂ ॥ *Jap(u) Ji Sāhib Saṭik*, 2nd ed., p. 5

26. ਇਕ ਜੇਹੜਾ (ਓਕਹੀਏ) ਮੰਗਲ ਰੂਪ ਪਰਮਾਤਮਾ ਹੈ ॥ *Jap(u) Ji Saṭik*, p. 1

27. ਇਕ ਹੈ, ਪਾਰਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਪਰਮੇਸ਼ਰ *Gurumat(i) Bhau Prakāshanī Ṭikā*, p. 8

28. ਇਕ ਵਾਹਿਗੁਰੂ, ਜਿਸ ਦਾ ਪ੍ਰਕਾਸ਼ ਲਗਾਤਾਰ ਹੁੰਦਾ ਰਹਿੰਦਾ ਹੈ, ਜੋ ਇਕ ਰਸ ਵਿਆਪਕ ਹੈ।

Jap(u) Ji Sāhib Saṭik, p. 1

of Sanskrit, do not forget to refer to the trinity of gods represented by the three sounds, of which 'Om' is believed to be constituted, namely, *a*, *u*, and *m*. Bawa Hari Prakash for example, explains that :

*Akār (a), ukār (u) and makār (m), with a half mātrā added to them, make Oankār. Akār (i.e., a) means Brahma (the Creator), ukār (i.e., u) stands for Vishnu (the Sustainer) and makār (i.e., m) represents Shiva (the Destroyer), while the half mātrā is to be understood as the Fourth State...*²⁹

Sant Sutey Prakāsh, while accepting the 'Trinity Formula' prefers to explain the *kār* or half-circle above ੴ as, "pure Brahma, known as *amatrikā*."³⁰

Bhai Sahib Sirdar Kapur Singh suggests "Transcendent-Immanent' as the intended meanings of 'O' + '*kār*.'³¹ Bhai Santokh Singh had expressed the same view earlier in his own style while contending, rather vehemently, that the Guru did not at all deviate from the Veda. "O is *purusha*, fortified with his *māyā*..."³² He also provides the following interesting information :

...All the Upanishads, Shastras and Puranas recommend the worship of Oamkār. Each of the Seven Independent Schools (of Philosophy) has its own nine brands of Oamkār, thereby raising their number to 63. The reference here is to the attributive and grosser aspect of Oamkār...His 64th aspect is subtle, non-attributive and without any trace of falsehood....Oamkār, has ten nomenclatures...If all of them are to be explained, that will mean padding the book unnecessarily. We, therefore, confine ourselves to explaining one nomenclature, namely, Oamkār. When Oamkār is uttered, the whole body from the feet to the head, experiences an elevation, that is why it is called Oamkār; the mere utterance of Oamkār makes the flow of life-wind blow

29. ਅਕਾਰ ਓਕਾਰ ਮਕਾਰ ਅਰਧ ਮਾਤ੍ਰਾ ਸੰਜੁਕਤ ਕਾ ਨਾਮ ਓਅਕਾਰ ਹੈ। ਅਕਾਰ ਕਹੀਏ ਬ੍ਰਹਮ॥ ਓਕਾਰ ਕਹੀਏ ਵਿਸ਼ਨੁ॥ ਮਕਾਰ ਕਹੀਏ ਸ਼ਿਵਾ। ਅਰਧ ਮਾਤ੍ਰਾ ਕਹੀਏ ਭੂਰੀਆ।

Sri Bodh Arthāvalī Tīkā Jap(u) Jī Kā, p. 8

30. ਅਰਧ ਚੰਦ੍ਰਕਾ ਸੁਧ ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਕਾ ਵਾਚਕ ਹੈ ਜਿਸ ਕੋ ਅਮਾਤ੍ਰ ਕਹਿਤੇ ਹੈ।

Sant Sutey Prakāsh Sadhu, *Prayāi Ādi Sī Gurū Granth Sāhib*, p. 3

31. *Op. cit.*, vol. 1, (fn. 1.).

32. ਏਕ ਜੋ ਮਾਯਾਸਵਲ ਪੁਰਖ ਹੈ ਸੋ ਓਅੰ ਓਚਾਰਨ ਕਰਤ ਭਯੋ॥

Garab Ganjānī Tīkā, p. 6

*upwards—that is why it is called Oamkār the mere utterance of Omkār also directs the vital wind to the Tenth Door—that is why it is called Oamkār.*³³

Narottam believes that the beginning with '1 (ੴ) 'O' and ending with *prasād(i)* is the original revelation granted by Lord Vishnu to Guru Nanak and represents the mystic essence of the Veda. Says he :

*The Grammarians explain ੴ as the Parmeshwara who protects in lieu of its mere utterance. They trace it from av which means 'protection'...there are authors who derive it from a combination of three phonemes a, u and m : a+u becoming 'O' and m turning into a dot (representing nasalation) to form the symbol ੴ... Thus this composite unit comprises three constituents (a,u and m), akār representing Virāt Ishwara and Vishwa-jīva, ukār standing for Hrinyagarbha Ishwara and Taijas jīva and makār meaning Māyāpatī Ishwara and Pragya jīva... This Oamkār is identified in books as half mantra. When the three mātrās are relieved of their stations and bodies, what remains intact is Parmātmā...which is also called Turīyā...*³⁴

The style and idiom adopted by the category of commentators who had proper training in the theological seminaries of the last

33. ਸ੍ਰਬ ਓਪਨਿਖਦੋ ਮੇਂ ਅਰ ਸ਼ਾਸਤ੍ਰੇ ਮੇਂ ਪੁਰਾਨੋਂ ਮੇਂ ਓਅੰਕਾਰ ਕੀ ਉਪਾਸਨਾ ਕੇ ਪ੍ਰਤੀਪਾਦਨ ਕਰਯੋ ਹੈ। ਸਪਮਤ ਜੇ ਸੰਪੂਰਨ ਹੈ। ਤਿਨ ਸਪਤੋਂ ਨੇ ਨੌਂ ਪ੍ਰਕਾਰ ਕੇ ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਕਰਯੋ ਹੈ। ਇਸ ਤੋਂ ਭੇਦ ਤ੍ਰੇਸਫ ਓਅੰਕਾਰ ਕੇ ਹੋਤ ਹੈ। ਸੋ ਓਅੰਕਾਰ ਸਗੁਣ ਸਬੂਲ ਰੂਪ ਹੈ... ਚੋਸਠਵੇਂ ਰੂਪ ਨਿਗਰਾਨ ਨਿਕਿਲਹ ਹੈ।... ਔਰ ਓਅੰਕਾਰ ਕੇ ਦਸ ਨਾਮ ਹੈ ਸੋ ਸ੍ਰਬ ਹੀ ਸਾਰਥਕ ਹੈ ਸੋ ਭੀ ਲਿਖਤ ਹੈ।... ਸਬ ਨਾਮੋਂ ਕੇ ਅਰਥ ਕਰੀਏ ਤੋਂ ਭੀ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਬਧਤ ਹੈ। ਤਾਂਤੇ ਏਕ ਜੋ ਓਅੰਕਾਰ ਨਾਮ ਹੈ ਤਿਸ ਕੋ ਹੀ ਅਰਥ ਕਰਤੇ ਹੈ। ਓਅੰਕਾਰ ਕੋ ਜਬ ਉਚਾਰ ਹੋਤਾ ਹੈ। ਤਬ ਚਰਨੋਂ ਤੇ ਲੇਕਰ ਮਸਤਕ ਪ੍ਰਯੋਤ ਸਭ ਸ੍ਰੀਰ ਕੋ ਉਚਾਰ ਕਰ ਦੇਤ ਹੈ। ਤਿਸ ਕਰ ਕੇ ਇਕ ਕਾ ਨਾਮ ਓਅੰਕਾਰ ਹੈ। ਓਅੰਕਾਰ ਕੇ ਕਹਨੇ ਕਰਿ ਪ੍ਰਾਨ ਊਰਧ ਕੋ ਪ੍ਰਾਪਤਿ ਹੋਤੇ ਹੈ। ਯਾਤੇ ਓਅੰਕਾਰ ਨਾਮ ਹੈ। ਓਅੰਕਾਰ ਕੇ ਉਚਾਰਤੇ ਪ੍ਰਾਨ ਦਸ ਦੁਆਰ ਕੋ ਸ੍ਰੋ ਭੀ ਪਹੁਚਤੁ ਹੈ। ਇਸ ਤੋਂ ਭੀ ਓਅੰਕਾਰ ਨਾਮ ਹੈ।

Bhai Santokh Singh, Garb Ganjanī Tīkā, pp. 9-10

34. ਓ ਕਾ ਅਰਥ ਬਯਾਕਰਣ ਵਾਲੇ ਨਾਮ ਲੇਨੇ ਮਾਤ੍ਰ ਸੇ ਰਖਾ ਕਰਨੇ ਵਾਲਾ ਪਰਮੇਸੁਰ ਕਹਤੇ ਹੈ ਅਵਧਾਤੁ ਸੇ ਇਸ ਕੋ ਬਨਾਵਤੇ ਹੈ ਅਵ ਕਾ ਅਰਥ ਰਖਯਾ ਹੈ ਯਾ ਤੇ ਰਛਾ ਕਰਨੇ ਵਾਲੇ ਕਾ ਨਾਮ ਓ ਕਰੇ ਹੈ ਔਰ ਗ੍ਰੰਥੋਂ ਵਾਲੇ ਅ 'ਓ' 'ਮ' ਇਕ ਤੀਨ ਅਖਰੋਂ ਕੇ ਮੇਲ ਕੇ ਇਸ ਕੋ ਬਨਾਵੇ ਹੈ ਅ 'ਓ' ਕਾ ਓ ਮੰਗੇ ਕੀ ਬਿੰਨੀ ਹੋ ਕਰ ਓ ਬਨੇ ਹੈ। ਅਕਾਰ ਉਕਾਰ ਮਕਾਰ ਮਾਤ੍ਰਾ ਇਨ ਤੀਨੋਂ ਕਾ ਨਾਮ ਹੈ ਮਾਤ੍ਰਾ ਓਮ ਅਵਯਵ ਕਾ ਹੈ।... ਅਕਾਰ ਮਾਤ੍ਰਾ ਕਾ ਅਰਥ ਬਿਰਾਟ ਈਸੁਰ ਐ ਬਿਸੁ ਜੀਵ ਹੈ... ਉਕਾਰ ਹੈ ਤਿਨਕਾ ਹਿਰਨਯ ਗਰਭ ਈਸੁਰ ਐ ਤੈਜਸ ਜੀਵ ਹੈ... ਤੀਸਰੀ ਮਾਤ੍ਰਾ ਮਕਾਰ ਹੈ ਤਿਸ ਕਾ ਅਰਥ ਮਾਯਾਪਤਿ ਈਸੁਰ ਔਰ ਪ੍ਰਗਯ ਜੀਵ ਹੈ, ਗ੍ਰੰਥੋਂ ਮੇਂ ਇਸ ਉਕਾਰ ਕੀ ਅਰਥਮਾਤ੍ਰਾ ਲਿਖੀ ਹੈ... ਪੁਰੇ ਤੀਨ ਅਵਯਵ ਹੈਂ ਉਨ ਅਵਯਵੋਂ ਕੇ ਜਨ ਅਵਸਥਾ ਔ ਸਰੀਰ ਭਾਗ ਦੂਰ ਕੀਯੋ ਤਬ ਉਨ ਕਾ ਆਧਾ ਭਾਗ ਪਰਮਾਤਮਾ ਸੇਖ ਰਹੇ ਹੈ ਆਧਾ ਭਾਗ ਅਵਸਥਾ ਔਰ ਦੂਰ ਹੋ ਜਾਵੇ ਹੈ... ਇਸੀ ਕੋ ਤੁਰੀਆ ਕਹੇ ਹੈ।

op.cit., pp. 11-15

century such as, for instance, Bhai Santokh Singh and Pandit Tara Singh Narottam, are all out of fashion these days and what overawed their readers till four or five decades ago, on account of their command of classical vocabulary and their plentiful knowledge, appears flat and incoherent to many of the modern Sikh readers who accept quite avidly the interpretations offered by scholars well-grounded in Western philosophy.³⁵ For example, when Bhai Sahib Sirdar Kapur Singh translates 'O'+*kār* as 'Transcendent-Immanent'³⁶ or 'Being-Becoming',³⁷ or when Dr. Mohan Singh Uberoi translates it as 'Logos-Creator',³⁸ they seem to make sense for them.

We move now to the next constituent of the *mool mantra*, namely *sat(i)*. There are persons who read *Ek Oamkār sat(i)* (ੴ ਸਤਿ) as one compact unit. According to them, the first comma in the text should be applied after *sat(i)*. Bhagat Singh Hira, for instance, prefers to join *sat(i)* not with *nām(u)*, but with what precedes it (i.e., ੴ and ੴ). According to him 1(ੴ) *O sat(i)* (ੴ ਸਤਿ) means '*ik Oamkār* alone is *sat(i)*.'³⁹ Late Dr. Sher Singh does better by placing the first mark of punctuation after the next unit *nām(u)*, thus making "*I O sat(i) nām(u)*" as the first unit of the *mool mantra*. His Punjabi rendering of the text reads as follows in English: "The One Brahman is the only existence which pervades everywhere."⁴⁰ The late Pandit Kartar Singh of Daakhaa was sure that *sat(i)* enjoyed an existence independent of the immediately following unit, *nām(u)*. Says he in his *Jap(u) Nisān* :

35. The writer feels tempted to quote here Mr. Niranjana Singh Saral's devastating attack on all traditional Schools of Interpretation in his *Jhāṭkā Parkāsh* :

ਅਰਥ ਅੰ ਅਨਰਥ ਕੀ ਤਨਕ ਭੀ ਸੂਝ ਪਰੀ, ਸਾਤ ਸਾਲ ਸੱਤੋ ਵਾਲੀ ਗਲੀ ਪੁੱਟ ਮਾਰੀ ਹੈ।
ਏਕ ਮੁੱਠੀ ਖਾਂਡ ਅੰ ਇੱਕੀਸ ਮੁੱਠੀ ਬਾਲੂ ਰੇਤ, ਫਰੀਦਕੋਟ ਵਾਲੀ ਟੀਕਾ-ਟਿੱਪਣੀ ਨਿਆਰੀ ਹੈ।
ਕਾਲ ਪੇਟ "ਮਾਲਾ" ਕਾ, ਅੰਤ੍ਰੀਵ ਅਰਥ ਕਾਢ ਲੀਨ, ਐਸੀ ਕੁੜੀ ਕਰਨੀ ਦਾ ਭਿੰਡਰ ਭੰਡਾਰੀ ਹੈ।
ਅਰਥ ਖਿੰਡਾਏ ਅੰ ਅਨਰਥੇ ਕੇ ਢੇਰ ਲਾਏ, ਸੇਪਦਾਈ ਗਿਆਨੀਓ ਕੀ ਕਥਾ ਹੀ ਨਿਆਰੀ ਹੈ।

36. *Op.cit.*, Vol. 1. p. 1 (fn. 1).

37. *Op.cit.*, Vol. II, p. ix.

38. *Ibid.*, Vol. 1 p. 1 (fn. 6); see also the same author's *Punjabi Bhākhā Vigīān Arē Gurmat Giān*, *op.cit.*, pp. 21-22, where it has been explained as "*Shabad jan bānī hai, ese duarā srisht(i) rachdā hai...*"

39. *O Darshan*, 1977, pp. 27, 49.

40. ਕੇਵਲ ਇਕੋ ਇਕ ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਹੀ ਸਰਬ ਵਿਆਪੀ ਹੋਂਦ ਹੈ।

Jap(u) Ji Darshan, p. 15

To regard sat(i) nām(u) as one complete unit and explain it as 'True name' or True is whose Name' is against all canons of Gurbani Grammar...⁴¹

There are others, such as Bhai Sahib Sirdar Kapur Singh,⁴² Mohan Singh Uberoi,⁴³ Gopal Singh⁴⁴ and Sohan Singh⁴⁵ who also grant *sat(i)* the status of an independent attribute with commas before and after it. Bhai Sahib Dharmanant Singh,⁴⁶ Harbhajan Singh⁴⁷ (Former Principal of Sikh Missionary College, Amritsar), and Parmanand⁴⁸ also opt for separating *sat(i)* from *nām(u)*, the next unit. But, according to the reading acceptable to an equally impressive group of scholars, *sat(i)* must be joined with the next unit, *nām(u)*, to form the compound *sat(i) nām(u)*, meaning 'True Name' or 'Truth is whose name' or 'True is whose name.'. This group includes such commentators as professors Sahib Singh,⁴⁹ Teja Singh,⁵⁰ and Taran Singh⁵¹ besides Bawa Hari Prakash,⁵² Macauliffe,⁵³ and others. Among these is Dr. Jasbir Singh Ahluwalia who in his paper on *Akāl Mūrat(i)* finds in *sat(i) nām(u)* "the identity of being and cognition".

The late Dr. Bhai Vir Singh, after having treated *sat(i)* and *nām(u)* as independent units in his *Santhyā*, informs his readers that :

The *bāṇī* also permits the reading of the combined word '*sat(i) nām(u)*,' viz : O my mind; always recite *sat(i) nām(u)*, *sat(i) nām(u)*.

Bhai Vir Singh leaves the matter there, without clinching the issue under discussion. The inevitable result is that his readers remain

41. "ਸਤਿਨਾਮ" ਇਸ ਸਮਾਸ ਕਰ ਕੇ 'ਸੱਚਾ ਨਾਮ' ਜਾਂ ਸੱਚ ਹੈ ਨਾਮ ਜਿਸ ਦਾ ਇਉਂ ਅਰਥ ਕਰਨਾ ਏਥੇ ਗੁਰਬਾਣੀ ਦੇ ਵਿਆਕਰਣ ਤੋਂ ਵਿਰੁੱਧ ਹੈ। Pandit Kartar Singh (Dakha), *Sri Jap(u) Nisan*, p. 14.

42. "Truth" *Op.cit.*, Vol. II, p. ix.

43. "Truth-existence" *Ibid.*, Vol. 1. p. 1 (fn. 6).

44. "The Eternal" *Loc. cit.*

45. "The Real" *Op.cit.*, p. 1.

46. *Jap(u) Parmārth Te Sada Subag*, pp. 21-22.

47. *Gems of Thoughts From Guru Nanak Bāṇī*, p. 9.

48. *Sri Jap(u) Jī Sāhib Satik*, 3rd edition, p. 24.

49. *Op.cit.*, 45.

50. *The Japujī or Guru Nanak's Meditation*, 2nd ed., p. 21; also *op.cit.*, p. 38.

51. *Guru Nanak Bāṇī Prakāsh*, Vol. 1, p. 1.

52. *Op.cit.*, p. 8.

53. "Whose name is true", *The Sikh Religion*, Vol. 1, p. 195.

in two minds even after going through the whole learned discourse on the subject.

Writes Bhai Gurdas : 'The true Guru Nanak caused the True Lord to be remembered in the form of *sat(i) nām(u)*..⁵⁴

We shall quote only four other scholars now. All of them are in favour of *sat(i)* and *nām(u)* being treated as one compound whole, *sat(i) nām(u)*, but the shades of their difference need to be noted :

NIHAL SINGH SURI : Whose personal, real, primordial name is *sat(i) nām(u)*⁵⁵

KAHN SINGH : *Sat(i)* (Truth) is His name or True is the name of the Eternal Being...At the time of mediation and recitation, it is not the word *sat(i) nām(u)* which is used, it is only *sat(i)*.⁵⁶

JODH SINGH : The main thing about Him is that He has no name and that is why we always call Him *sat(i)*.⁵⁷

BAKSHISH SINGH NIRMALĀ : ..Real are His Name and Form, all other Names and Forms are unreal.⁵⁸

We have been able to cover almost half of the next adjoining constituent *nām(u)* within our discussion of *sat(i)* but some of the most interesting etymological surmises remain to be introduced. Let us, for example, scan what Giana Singh Giani (*sic*) has to say on this point :

Now we shall start explaining the word nām(u). It means God is well-known' : further, it means that He is the 'root' of all creation; furthermore, na+ām (i.e., na meaning 'negation' and ām meaning 'disease') also means 'free from disease', alternatively, na stands for 'not', ām means 'common', therefore

54. ਬਾਣੀ ਵਿਚ 'ਸਤਿਨਾਮ' ਇਕੱਠਾ ਪਦ ਆ ਕੇ ਉਸ ਦੇ ਜਪਣ ਦੀ ਆਗਿਆ ਵੀ ਲਿਖੀ ਹੈ। ਯਥਾ :
ਜਪਿ ਮਨ ਸਤਿਨਾਮੁ ਸਦਾ ਸਤਿਨਾਮੁ॥
ਭਾਈ ਗੁਰਦਾਸ ਜੀ ਲਿਖਦੇ ਹਨ : ਸਤਿ ਰੂਪੁ ਸਤਿਨਾਮੁ ਕਰਿ ਸਤਿਗੁਰੁ ਨਾਨਕ ਦੇਵ ਜਪਾਇਆ॥

Op.cit., p. 16

55. ਜਿਸ ਦਾ ਜਾਤੀ, ਅਸਲੀ, ਪਰਾ ਪੂਰਬਲਾ ਨਾਮੁ ਸਤਿਨਾਮੁ ਹੈ...

Op.cit., p. 7

56. ਸਤਿ (ਸਤਯ) ਇਹ ਨਾਮ, ਅਥਵਾ ਸਤਯ ਹੈ ਜਿਸ ਅਕਾਲ ਪੁਰਖ ਦਾ ਨਾਮ...

ਚਿੰਤਨ ਅਤੇ ਜਪ ਸਮੇਂ 'ਸਤਿਨਾਮ' ਸ਼ਬਦ ਦਾ ਅਭਿਆਸ ਨਹੀਂ ਹੁੰਦਾ, ਕੇਵਲ ਸਤਿ ਦਾ ਹੋਇਆ ਕਰਦਾ ਹੈ।

Op.cit., p. 129

57. ਇਹ ਹੀ ਇਕ ਗੁਣ ਹੈ ਜੋ ਉਹਦਾ ਕਦੀ ਨਾਮ ਨਹੀਂ ਹੁੰਦਾ ਤੇ ਇਸ ਲਈ ਅਸੀਂ ਸਦਾ ਉਹਨੂੰ 'ਸਤਿ' ਦੇ ਨਾਮ ਨਾਲ ਪੁਕਾਰਦੇ ਹਾਂ।

Ṭikā Jap (u) Jī Sahib, p. 7

58. ਸਤਿ ਹੈ ਨਾਮ ਤੇ ਰੂਪ ਜਿਸ ਕਾ ਔਰ ਨਾਮ ਰੂਪ ਝੂਠੇ ਹੈ।

Op. cit., p. 5

nām(u) also has the connotation of 'something which is special...'⁵⁹

Most of our commentary writers agree that *nām(u)* is followed by a comma, but the writer happened to come across an old Udāsī Mahant, Gopal Dev of Dhariwal (Distt. Gurdaspur), who insisted that the comma had to be replaced with a question mark. His reading, as that of a number of other traditionalists, was : "*Sat (i) Nām(u)?*" "He is the only ever-existent Truth. But what is His Name ?" The reply, according to the Mahant's version, is available in the next constituent of the *mantra*, i.e., His Name is *Karatā* (the Doer or Creator). According to still another version, there has to be a hyphen between *nām(u)* and *karatā*, *nām(u)-karatā*, i.e., the Creator of the Name.⁶⁰ Pandit Gurmukh Singh accepts the hyphen but gives his characteristic twist to its import. According to him, the compound *nām-karatā* means "I, the supreme spirit, *am* the Creator of this universe of names and forms."⁶¹ Incidentally, Swami Parmanand had suggested that "the word *rūpa* (form) may be added after *nām(u)*, because all created things in the universe have names and forms... Therefore, the *nām(u)* of the original text is expressive of *rūp* also...",⁶² but Sohan Singh castigates the Swami and others of his thinking about the essentiality of the concomitance of *rūp* with *nāma* by telling them that "a universal Being cannot be identified with any particular form and, hence, He is simply the Name, i.e. the Spirit."⁶³ Dr. Trumpp hyphenates *karatā* with the previous word but that word for him is not *nām(u)*, it is *sat(i) nām(u)*, so that his reading is *sat(i) nām(u) karatā* and translates it as "The true name is the Creator."⁶⁴

There is another set of scholars, including Bhai Sahib

59. ਆਗੈ॥ ਨਾਮ॥ ਪਦ ਕਾ ਅਰਥ ਚਲਿਆ ਜੇ ਹੈ 'ਨਾਮ' ਕਹੀਐ ਪ੍ਰਸੰਧ ਹੈ ਪਰਮਾਤਮਾ॥
ਵਾ॥ ਨਾਮ॥ ਕਹੀਐ ਮੂਲ ਹੈ ਜਗਤ ਕਾ॥ ਵਾ॥ ਨ॥ ਆਪ ਨ॥ ਕਹੀਐ ਨਹੀਂ ਹੈ ਜਿਸ ਮੇਂ॥
ਆਮ॥ ਕਹੀਐ ਰੋਗ ਸੋ ਕਹੀਐ ਨਾਮ॥ ਵਾ॥ ਨ॥ ਕਹੀਐ ਆਮ ਖਾਸ ਪ੍ਰਸੰਚ॥॥

Giani Singh Giani, *Ādi Bānī Sri Jap(u) Sāhib*, p. 6

60. (i) Parmanand, *op.cit.*, p. 25.

(ii) Sant Ganesha Singh, *op.cit.*, p. 1.

61. ਨਾਮ ਰੂਪ ਜਗਤ ਦਾ ਕਰਤਾ ਮੈਂ ਪਰਮਾਤਮਾ ਹੂੰ। *Op.cit.*, p. 1.

62. *Op.cit.*, pp. 24-25.

63. *Op.cit.*, p. 3.

64. *Loc.cit.*

Dharmanant Singh,⁶⁵ Kartar Singh,⁶⁶ Dr. Sher Singh,⁶⁷ Sahib Singh⁶⁸ and Harnam Das,⁶⁹ for whom *karatā* is preceded and succeeded by commas and should stand on its own legs as an independent unit. The compilers of *Shabdārth*, on the other hand, think that the creator of the *mool mantra* intended *karatā* to be joined with the next unit *purakh(u)*. They quote quite a few verses from the Scripture to prove that *karatā* and *purakh(u)* are one unit.⁷⁰ M.A. Macauliffe too joins *karatā* with *purakh(u)* but translates the compound simply as the “Creator”, consciously ignoring the presence of *purakh(u)*. This is what he has to say in justification of his stand :

“It is perhaps not necessary to translate the word purakh(u). It means male or creative agency. The all-pervading spirit in union with a female element uttered a word from which sprang creation.”⁷¹

Harbhajan Singh⁷² and Surindar Singh Kohli⁷³ like Macauliffe also fight shy of *purakh(u)*. Trumpp puts a wedge between *karatā* and *purakh(u)* but his reading differs from all others in that he joins *purakh(u)* with the next unit *nirbhau* and translates his compound *purakh(u) nirbhau*, as ‘the spirit without fear’.⁷⁴ Pandit Gurmukh Singh puts a question mark after *karatā* and makes us believe that *purakh(u)* is the Guru’s own reply to it. For him, *purakh(u)* means the ‘soul’.⁷⁵ Giani Sher Singh’s synonym for *purakh(u)* seems to be a ‘male person or husband’. He quotes from the *Gurū Granth Sāhib* the text which says, “There is only one *purakh(u)* in this world, all others are women.”⁷⁶ But more than any one else, we must hear what Giana Singh Giani has to say about this word :

65. *Op.cit.*, p. 22.

66. *Loc.cit.*

67. *Op.cit.*, p. 47.

68. *Op.cit.*, p. 80.

69. *Op.cit.*, p. 32.

70. *Shabdārth, op.cit.*, p. 1.

71. *Loc.cit.*, (fn. 2).

72. *Loc.cit.*

73. *A Critical Study of Ādi Granth*, p. 335.

74. *Loc.cit.*

75. ਇਸ ਜਗਤ ਦਾ ਕਰਤਾ ਕੌਨ ਹੈ ? ...ਸਰੀਰ ਰੂਪੀ ਪੁਰਖਿ ਮੈਂ ਪ੍ਰਕਾਸ਼ ਰੂਪ ਪੁਰਖ ਮੈਂ ਜੀਵ ਹੂੰ।

Op.cit., pp. 3-4

76. ਮਾਲਕ ਯਥਾ, ਇਸ ਜਗ ਮਹਿ ਪੁਰਖੁ ਏਕੁ ਹੈ ਹੋਰ ਸਗਲੀ ਨਾਰ ਸਥਾਈ॥

Op.cit., p. 3

He, who permeates wholly in the smallest as well as the biggest creatures, is called purakh(u); purakh(u) also signifies the person who possesses purakhatva or virility; purakh : 'pu' is the name of a hell and 'rakh' stands for protection, i.e., He who saves from hell; further, pur+kh: 'pur' means a habitat and 'kh' means 'prevalent', i.e., He who is prevalent in all the puris, namely, the human bodies, is called purakh(u); 'pur' means the puris which stands for human bodies and 'kh' means 'destruction': thus it also means "He who destroys puris or human bodies." And last of all, it means 'He who is the Lord of the puris,' i.e., of the human bodies...⁷⁷

Of course, the Giani does not come to the aid of the readers about what Guru Nanak wanted *purakh(u)* to mean in the sacred text.

Dr. Gopal Singh trying to be non-literal, translates the portion '*nām(u) karatā purakh(u)*' as the "All-pervading *purusha*, the Creator."⁷⁸ Bhai Sahib Sirdar Kapur Singh translates *karatā* and *purakh(u)* simply as "Creator, Person..."⁷⁹ Dr. Mohan Singh Uberoi, renders them as "Creator-integrator..."⁸⁰ while Sohan Singh does it as "the Creator, the controller and enjoyer..."⁸¹ For Prof. Sahib Singh *purkh(u)* signifies the "omnipresence of God"⁸² but Dr. Sher Singh's emphasis is on its omniscience.⁸³ Giani Kirpal Singh is one of the tribe which provides interesting though far-fetched interpretations. One in the present case is that '*pur*' means 'full of' and '*kh*' means 'like the sky'.⁸⁴ "*Pur*", says Swami Parmanand,

77. ॥ਪੁਰਖ॥ ਕਹੀਐ ਜੋ ਸਰਬ ਸੁਖਯਮ ਅਸਥੂਲ ਜੀਵ ਜੰਤੋ ਕੋ ਬੀਚ ਮੋਂ ਪੂਰਣ ਹੈ ਸੋ ਕਹੀਐ ਪੁਰਖ॥ ਵਾ॥ ਪੁਰਖ ਕਹੀਐ ਪੁਰਖਤ ਵਾਲਾ ਭਾਵ ਬਾਲ ਵਾਲਾ ਹੈ॥ ਪੁ॥ ਰਖ॥ ਪੁ॥ ਕਹੀਐ ਜੋ ਨਰਕ ਪੁਨਾਮਾ ਹੈ ਤਿਸ ਨਰਕ ਤੇ ਜੋ॥ ਰਖ॥ ਕਹੀਐ ਰਖ ਤਿਸਕਾ ਰਖ ਤਿਸਕਾ ਨਾਮ ਪੁਰਖ ਹੈ॥ ਵਾ॥ ਪੁਰ॥ ਖ॥ ਕਹੀਐ ਦੇਹ ਰੂਪੀ ਜੋ ਪੁਰੀਆ ਹੈ ਤਿਨਾ ਪੁਰੀਆ ਕੋ ਬੀਚ ਮੋਂ ਜੋ॥ ਖ॥ ਕਹੀਐ ਇਸ ਬਿਤ ਹੈ ਸੋ ਕਹੀਐ ਪੁਰਖ॥ ਪੁਰ॥ ਕਹੀਐ ਦੇਹ ਰੂਪੀ ਜੋ ਪੁਰੀਆ ਹੈ ਤਿਨਾ ਕੋ ਜੋ॥ ਕਹੀਐ ਨਾਸ ਕਰੇ ਸੋ ਕਹੀਐ॥ ਪੁਰਖ॥ ਵਾ॥ ਸਾਧੀਆਂ ਜੋ ਦੇਹਿ ਰੂਪੀ ਪੁਰੀਆ ਤਿਨਾ ਕਾ ਨਾਸ ਹੈ ਸੋ ਕਹੀਐ ਪੁਰਖ॥ Loc.cit.

78. Loc.cit.

79. Loc.cit.

80. Op.cit. (fn. 6).

81. Loc.cit.

82. ਜੋ ਸਾਰੇ ਜਗ ਵਿਚ ਵਿਆਪਕ ਹੈ। Op.cit., p. 46.

83. ਉਹ ਹਸਤੀ ਜਿਹੜੀ ਸਿਸਟੀ ਦੀ ਕਰਤਾ ਹੈ, ਉਹ 'ਪਲੈਨਰ ਤੇ ਡਿਜ਼ਾਈਨਰ' ਹੈ। Op.cit. p. 81.

84. *Sampardāi Tīkā Ādi Sṛī Gurū Granth Sāhib Jī*, 4th ed. p. 89.

"means body. He who resides in the body in the form of effulgence, free of all its bonds, like an observer, is the *purusha*."⁸⁵ Vinoba Ji, reading *karatā-purakh(u)* as one word, explains it as. "...God is the Creator of the Universe. Also he is All-mind. '*Purukh*' specifically implies that not Nature but God is the Creator..."⁸⁶

The first negative attribute, *nirbhau* (a compound of *nir*+*bhau*), which is the next unit in the text, has already been touched upon. It is the same word which the founder of Arya Samaj misused when he mounted an unmerited attack on Guru Nanak Dev, and which, in turn, led to the souring of relations between the Sikhs and the Arya Samaj.⁸⁷ However, this aspect of *nirbhau*, not being our concern here, we revert to the subject proper with the caution that Swami Ji's statement is based on incorrect and untenable surmises and prejudice.

Swami Harnam Das summarises the different meanings ascribed to this unit by indigenous scholars, thus :

*Nirbhau is interpreted as, (i) nirbhaya, 'nir' meaning 'without' and 'bhaya' means 'birth or 'origin' that is 'He is without birth or origin ; (ii) He is without the bondage of worldly things; (iii) He is the embodiment of unadulterated fear, and (iv) nothing but the world is His form.*⁸⁸

85. *Op.cit.*, p. 25.

86. *Op.cit.*, p. 4.

87. "The aim of Nanak was no doubt, good; but he did not possess any learning and was merely acquainted with the dialect of the (Panjab) villagers among whom he was born. He was quite ignorant of the Vedas and the Shastras and of Sanskrit, otherwise why should he have written *Nirbhau* instead of *Nirbhaya*. Another proof of his ignorance of the Sanskrit language is his composition called '*sahskrit*' (sic) hymns (*satotras*). He wanted to show that he had some pretensions to the knowledge of Sanskrit. But how could one know Sanskrit without learning it. It is possible that he might have passed for a Sanskrit scholar before those ignorant villagers who had never heard a man speak Sanskrit. He could never have done it unless he was anxious to gain public applause, fame and glory. He must have sought after fame or he would have preached in the language he knew and told the people that he had not read Sanskrit. Since he was a little vain, he may possibly have been resorted to some sort of make-believe to gain reputation and acquire fame..." *Light of Truth, or An English Translation of the Satyarth Prakash*, (Tr.) Dr. Chiranjiva Bharadwaja, p. 443.

88. (ਅ) ਸੰਪ੍ਰਦਾਯਕ: 'ਨਿਰਭਵ' ਅਰਥ ਵੀ ਕਰਦੇ ਹਨ। 'ਭਵ'-ਪੈਦਾਯਜ (ਉਤਪਤਿ) ਤੋਂ ਬਿਨਾ ਹੈ, (ੲ) ਭਵ-ਮੌਜੂਦਾ ਤੋਂ ਰਹਿਤ ਹੈ। (ਸ) (ਨਿਰ) ਕੇਵਲ 'ਭਯ ਸਰੂਪ ਹੈ, (ਹ) (ਨਿਰ) ਨਿਰਾ ਸੰਸਾਰ ਹੀ (ਉਸ ਦਾ ਸਰੂਪ) ਹੈ।

Op.cit., p. 34.

This quotation provides another peep into the wild adventurism of some of our old interpreters. Now let us see what the modern commentators have to say about *nirbhau*. Sohan Singh interprets it as “not being under an imposed discipline or restraint”⁸⁹ and “beyond restraint, the spontaneous.” Dr. Wazir Singh renders it as “contradicted by none”⁹⁰ while Bhai Sahib Sirdar Kapur Singh translates it as “Non-thesis.”⁹¹ This scholar translates the next negative attribute *nirvair(u)* as “Non-antithesis,”⁹² though generally speaking, its most obvious interpretation, “without enmity” or “without hatred” holds the ground among the majority of writers. Sohan Singh, arguing his case against this common interpretation protests that the reference here is to the absence of “internal antagonisms,” “internal inconsistencies” or “contradictions.” It should, therefore, mean, “internal harmony.”⁹³ As usual, we come across inventive minds even in the case of this word of common use. For example, some traditionalists explain it as “One who is known for His specialization in enmity,” “Absolute Rancour,”⁹⁴ and so on.

Nirbhau and *nirvair(u)* are the two attributes about which no punctuational controversy exists, but as soon as we arrive at the ninth unit, *akāl*, we find ourselves face to face with the same difficulty. Is it another independent negative *a+kāl* (sans+time) or has it to be paired with the tenth unit, *mūrat(i)*? Avtar Singh Vahiria,⁹⁵ Giani Sher Singh,⁹⁶ Budh Singh,⁹⁷ Gulab Singh,⁹⁸ Shivdayal Singh *alias* Panna Lal Khatri,⁹⁹ and Hari Singh Gurmukh,¹⁰⁰ as also Teja

89. *Op.cit.*, p. 4.

90. *Loc.cit.*

91. *Op.cit.*, Vol.II, p. IX.

92. *Ibid.*

93. *Loc.cit.*

94. (ਨਿਰ) ਵਿਸ਼ੇਸ਼ ਵੈਰ ਵਾਲਾ, Swami Harnam Das, *loc.cit.*

95. ਕਾਲ ਤੇ ਮੂਰਤਿ ਥੀ ਰਹਿਤ ਅਰਥਾਤ ਮਰਨ ਵਿਚ ਨਹੀਂ ਆਂਵਦਾ... *Guru Dhandhora*, p. 25.

96. “ਜਿਸ ਦੀ ਮੂਰਤ (ਸਰੂਪ) ਕਾਲ ਜਾਲ ਤੋਂ ਪਰੇ ਹੈ” *Op.cit.*, p. 3.

97. “ਤੂੰ ਹੀ ਇਕ ਕਾਲ ਤੋਂ ਰਹਿਤ ਹਸਤੀ ਹੈ ਅਤੇ ਬਾਕੀ ਸਭ ਜ਼ੂਨਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਹਨ”। *Op.cit.*, p. 3.

98. “ਜਿਸ ਕੀ ਮੂਰਤੀ ਅਕਾਲ ਹੈ...” *Jap(u) Prakāsh*, pp. 13-14.

99. (ਸੰਪੂਰਨ ਜਗਤ ਕਾਲ ਕੇ ਵੱਸ ਹੈ ਪਰੇਤੁ) ਤੂੰ ਅਕਾਲ ਰੂਪ ਹੈਂ। *Jap(u) Ji Sahib Saṭik*, p. 8.

100. “Yeh pad alif, harf-i-nafi aur kāl aur mūrat do ismon se murakkab hai. In mein se kāl ba-m’ani waqt aur maat ke haiṁ aur mūrat bam’ani sūrat aur sarūp ke haiṁ, jo murād hasti aur zindagi se hai. Pas akāl key m’ani us zāt-i-pāk ke haiṁ ki jis kā koī”

Singh,¹⁰¹ Sahib Singh,¹⁰² Swami Harnam Das,¹⁰³ etc., are in favour of the paired reading. Ranged against them are Sodhi Hazara Singh,¹⁰⁴ Bhai Sahib Sirdar Kapur Singh,¹⁰⁵ Khushwant Singh,¹⁰⁶ Sohan Singh,¹⁰⁷ Dr. Sher Singh,¹⁰⁸ Bhagat Singh Hira¹⁰⁹ and Dr. Wazir Singh,¹¹⁰ who regard *akāl* as a complete entity in itself.

The question is, do these schools differ in their understanding of *akāl* and *mūrat(i)* units of the *mool mantra*? Yes, will be the answer, if one were to depend upon the evidence provided by scholars. Says Swami Parmanand :

*'a' is negation, kaal is time and moorat(i) is anything whose form is mutable; which exists at one time and does not at another,...He who is immutable and retains its wholeness in space, time and substance, and remains unchanged throughout time—past, present and future, is called akāl mūrat(i)...*¹¹¹

Bhai Santokh Singh explains *akāl mūrat(i)* thus :

'a' according to Ekakshara Kosha means Vishnu, 'k' means Brahma and 'l', on account of the inherence of laya (merger) in it, stands

➤ *waqt paidāish aur maut kā nahin hai. Arabī zubān mein is lafz kā tarjumah 'Hai u-la-Yamut aur Sanskrit mein 'ajanma' aur 'ajar amar' hai. Pas is tamām pad ke mani yeh hai kih Srī akāl purakh ji ki zār-i-pāk akāl mūrat hai y'ani woh la fanāh aur azālī aur abādī aur hameshah 'qa-i-m biz-zat' hai"—Rahnumāi-Didāri-Haq. Part 1 (Urdu), p. 181.*

101. ਉਸ ਦੀ ਹਸਤੀ ਸਮੇਂ ਦੀ ਮਾਰ ਤੋਂ ਪਰੇ ਹੈ। *Satigur Nanak Dev Dee Bānee Jap(u) Jee Dā Tēekā, op.cit., p. 39.*

102. ਬਬਦ 'ਮੂਰਤਿ ਇਸਤੀ ਲਿੰਗ ਹੈ, 'ਅਕਾਲ' ਇਸ ਦਾ ਵਿਸ਼ੇਸ਼ਣ ਹੈ, ਇਹ ਭੀ ਇਸਤੀ ਲਿੰਗ ਰੂਪ ਵਿਚ ਲਿਖਿਆ ਗਿਆ ਹੈ। ਜੇ ਬਬਦ 'ਅਕਾਲ' ਇਕੱਲਾ ਹੀ 'ਪੁਰਖ', 'ਨਿਰਭਉ', 'ਨਿਰਵੈਰ' ਵਾਂਗ 1ੳ ਦਾ ਗੁਣਵਾਚਕ ਹੁੰਦਾ ਤਾਂ ਪੁਲਿੰਗ ਰੂਪ ਵਿਚ ਹੁੰਦਾ ਤਾਂ ਇਸ ਦੇ ਅੰਤ ਵਿਚ () ਹੁੰਦਾ। *Op.cit., p. 46.*

103. ਜਿਸ ਨੂੰ ਕੋਈ ਥਰ, ਪਾਲ, ਮਾਰ ਨਹੀਂ ਸਕਦਾ, ਉਹ ਮੂਰਤਿ ਹੈ। *Op.cit., p. 41.*

104. "ਕਾਲ ਦਾ ਅਲਬ ਨਹੀਂ, ਖਉ ਨਾਮ ਅਤੇ ਮਿਤ੍ਰ ਕਰਦੇ ਹਨ।... ਇਕ ਏਕੰਕਾਰ ਦਾ ਨਾਮ ਨਹੀਂ।" *Jap(u) Bichar, p. 14.*

105. "Beyond Times," *op. cit., Vol. II.*

106. "He is beyond time Immortal," *Hymns of Guru Nanak, p. 43.*

107. "The Timeless," *Loc.cit.*

108. "...ਉਹ ਜੋੜਾ ਮਰੇ ਨਾ।" *op.cit., p. 84.*

109. "...ਕਾਲ ਸੁਤੰਤਰ ਅਰਥਾਤ ਦੋਹਾਂ ਜਿਰਿਆਂ ਤੋਂ ਸਮੇਂ ਦੇ ਤ੍ਰੈ-ਹਦੇ ਤੋਂ ਮੁਕਤ ਹਸਤਤੀ ਹੈ।"

Op.cit., p. 95

110. "Reality, transcending time," *loc.cit.*

111. *Op.cit., p. 26.*

for Shiva. *Karatā purakh(u)* assumes the form of *trimūrti* here, hence *akāl mūrat(i)*.¹¹²

Gian Singh Giani conjures up a still more interesting etymology of *mūrat(i)*; when he says that *mū* means 'my' and '*rat(i)*' is 'love', so *akāl mūrat(i)* will mean, "I love the timeless."¹¹³ According to Sodhi Hazara Singh, "*Nirankār* is formless but *Ekankār* has a form. *Mūrat(i)* means 'gender', 'shape' or 'form'."¹¹⁴ Giani Kirpal Singh gives four alternative meanings and the fourth is the one which had eluded all other previous commentators. He borrows the negating prefix '*a*' from *akāl* and transfers it to *mūrat(i)* which then is made to mean, "sans time, sans mass."¹¹⁵ Teja Singh explains *akāl mūrat(i)* as "an existence (*hastī*), beyond the beat of time,"¹¹⁶ Sohan Singh ridiculing those who combine two words into a compound, says, "...*Akāl-mūrat(i)* can imply a timeless embodiment and it is for the reader to judge if we may call God a timeless embodiment ?"¹¹⁷ Dr. Gopal Singh translates *mūrat(i)* as "the Being,"¹¹⁸ Bhai Sahib Sirdar Kapur Singh does it as "Form"¹¹⁹ and Dr. Mohan Singh as "Form-manifester."¹²⁰ Trumpp takes *akāl mūrat(i)* to be one unit having a timeless form."¹²¹ Khushwant Singh renders *mūrat(i)* as "His Spirit pervades the universe,"¹²² probably confusing *mūrat(i)* with *purakh(u)*, while Dr. Jasbir Singh Ahluwalia in his paper on '*akāl mūrat(i)*' understands it as "Supra-temporal, time-transcendent nature of God."

Next in the serial order come *ajūnī* and *saibham*. Usually, they

112. ਵਾ ਏਕਾਮੁਰ ਕੋਸ ਮੇਂ ਅਕਾਰ ਬਿਸਨੁ ॥

ਕਾ ਬੁਹਮੇ ਕੋ ਲੈ ਕਰਨ ਤੇ ਲਕਾਰ ਤੇ ਨਾਮ ਸਿਵ ਕੋ ॥

ਕਰਤਾ ਪੁਰਖੁ ਫ਼ੀਨ ਮੂਰਤਿ ਬਲਿ ਬੈਠਯੋ ਯਾਂਤੇ ਅਕਾਲ ਮੂਰਤਿ ॥ *Op.cit.*, p. 14.

113. *Op.cit.*, p. 7.

114. *Op.cit.*, p. 15.

115. *Op.cit.*, p. 91.

116. *Op.cit.*, p. 39.

117. *Op.cit.*, p. 4.

118. *Loc.cit.*

119. *Ibid.*, Vol. II.

120. *Ibid.*, Vol. I.

121. *Loc.cit.*

122. *Loc.cit.*

are read as separate units. Dr. B.B. Chaubey suggests in his article that *ajūnī* should be interpreted as 'not bound by place' rather than relating it to God's, non-appearance in the uterus. "But," warns Sodhi Hazara Singh, "the *ajūnī-saibham* pair has been used as a compound also..."¹²³ Swami Harnam Das is firmly of the opinion that "the whole context goes in favour of regarding *ajūnī-saibham* as a single whole..."¹²⁴ Bawa Hari Prakash comes forward with the suggestion that '*sai*' meaning '*sansai*' (doubt) [*Sk sanshaya*] and '*bham*' meaning '*nāsha*' destruction, *saibham* would mean 'without doubt...' ¹²⁵ Dr. Trumpp derives *saibham* from *Sambhava* (birth, production) and refers also to its other forms used in the scripture, such as ਸੰਭੂ, ਸੰਭੋ ਸਭਵਿਉ,¹²⁶ Swami Parmanand's interpretation is :

*...he, who is born of womb is yoni sai... but He whose birth is unrelated to the womb and always remains immutable is called ayonisah and 'bham' means 'light'. God is free from any contact with the womb and is Himself light, therefore, He is called ajūnī saibham.*¹²⁷

After explaining *saibham* as "He is His own creation, not anybody else's", Anad Ghan adds that "*sai* also means a hundred or innumerable; *bham* means form (*rūp*), effulgence (*tej*) and light (*prakāsh*)". Therefore, *saibham* will further mean, He who has innumerable forms, immeasurable effulgence and limitless light.¹²⁸ A novel interpretation is offered by Giani Badan Singh and associates :

What is He ? (He is) akāl... He is free from Kāl (time), which destroys everybody. Mūrat(i) : What is His Form or, in other words, what sort of a person is He ? Ajūnī sai i.e. He is free

123. ਅਜੂਨੀ ਸੈਭੋ ਨਾਮ ਇਕੱਠਾ ਭੀ ਵਰਤਿਆ ਹੋਇਆ ਹੈ। *Op.cit.*, p. 17.

124. ਪਿਛਲੇ ਸਾਰੇ ਪ੍ਰਕਰਣ ਤੋਂ ਸ਼ਬਦ ਸਿੱਧੀ "ਅਜੂਨੀ ਸੈਭੋ" ਇਕ ਸ਼ਬਦ ਦੀ ਹੁੰਦੀ ਹੈ। *Op.cit.*, p. 44.

125. ਸੋ ਕਹੀਐ ਸੈਸੈ ਭੈ ਕਹੀਐ ਨਾਸ॥ ਸੋ ਸੰਸਿਯੋ ਤੇ ਰਹਿਤ ਹੈ। *Op.cit.*, p. 10.

126. *Op.cit.*, (fn. 1). *Loc.cit.*

127. *Loc.cit.*

128. ਆਪਣੇ ਆਪ ਤੇ ਆਪ ਹੀ ਹੈ, ਕਿਸੀ ਦਾ ਕੀਆ ਹੂਆ ਨਹੀਂ...। ਸੈ ਨਾਮ ਸੈਂਕੜੇ ਕਾ ਭੀ ਹੈ, ਅਸੰਖ ਕਾ ਭੀ ਹੈ, 'ਭੂ' ਨਾਮ ਰੂਪ ਕਾ ਭੀ ਹੈ, ਤੇਜ ਕਾ ਭੀ ਹੈ, ਪਰਕਾਸ਼ ਕਾ ਭੀ ਹੈ। *Gurbānī Tike*, (ed. Ratan Singh Jaggi), p. 106.

from māyā, has immaculate form (suddh sarūp) and is causeless. Sai in the Bāngar region means hai (i.e., 'is')...¹²⁹

The learned Gianis have introduced *sai* here as a verb in the *mool mantra*. Those who trace the etymology of *saibham* to *svayambhu* (self-created) are, of course, legion and we need not quote them. Among the moderns we come across such shades of difference as "Being of His own Being,"¹³⁰ "Self-existence,"¹³¹ "self-expression"¹³² and "self-dependent."¹³³

With *gur prasād(i)*, we reach the penultimate pair of units in the *mool mantra*. Here also, we find among others, the Comma and the Hyphen schools joining issue with each other. Scholars, such as Sodhi Hazara Singh¹³⁴ and Gian Singh¹³⁵ give both the readings. Sohan Singh Galhotra chooses to join *saibham* with *gur* and *prasād(i)* and makes this combination yield the following meanings :

...born of itself, He is my Guru, through whose courtesy (I have been able to say this and am going to say or write more of it now).¹³⁶

For Sant Gulab Singh *gur prasād(i)* is a propitiatory invocation (*vastu niradesh mangalācharan*) meaning "May the Guru's, (i.e. God's) kindness visit us!"¹³⁷ Prof. Teja Singh, conscious of the Muslim

129. ਵਹੁ ਕੈਸਾ ਹੈ (ਅਕਾਲ) ਸਭਨੇ ਮਾਰਨੇ ਵਾਲੇ ਕਾਲ ਸੇ ਭਿੰਨ ਹੈ (ਮੂਰਤਿ), ਸਰੂਪ, ਜਿਸ ਕਾ ਪੁਨਾ ਕੈਸਾ ਵਹੁ ਪੁਰਖੁ ਹੈ। (ਅਜੂਨੀ ਸੈ) ਮਾਯਾ ਤੇ ਰਹਿਤ ਸੁਧ ਸਰੂਪ ਅਕਾਰਣ ਹੈ ਸੇ ਸਬਦੁ ਬਾਂਗਰ ਦੇਸ ਮੈਂ ਹੈ।" *Op. cit.*, p. 3.

130. UNESCO, *op. cit.*, p. 28.

131. Gopal Singh, *loc. cit.*

132. Kapur Singh, *loc. cit.*, Vol. II.

133. Mohan Singh Uberoi, *loc. cit.*, Vol. 1.

134. ਗੁਰ-ਗੁਰੂ ਅੰਧੇਰੇ ਦੀ ਰੋਸ਼ਨੀ ਹੈ। ਪ੍ਰਸਾਦਿ-ਮੂਲਮੰਤ੍ਰ ਪੂਰਾ ਵਾਕ ਹੈ। ਗੁਰ ਪਰਸਾਦੁ ਕਹੇ, ਨਾਮੁ ਦੇਵੈ...ਗੁਰ ਪ੍ਰਸਾਦਿ-ਗੁਰਬਾਣੀ ਵਿਚ ਸਾਧ ਪ੍ਰਸਾਦਿ, ਸੰਤ ਪ੍ਰਸਾਦਿ... ਵਾਕ ਅੰਸ ਭੀ ਵਰਤੇ ਹੋਏ ਹਨ। *Op. cit.*, p. 18.

135. 'ਗੁਰ ॥ ਕਹੀਏ ਵਡਾ ਹੈ...॥ ਧਾਰਮਕ ਵਿਦਯਾ ਕੇ ਦੇਨੇ ਵਾਲਾ ਭਾਵ ਵਕਤਾ ॥ ਪ੍ਰਸਾਦਿ ॥ ਕਹੀਐ ਭੰਡਾਰਾ ॥ ਵਾ ॥ ਪ੍ਰਸਾਦਿ ਕਿਆ ਅਨੰਦ ਰੂਪ ਹੈ ॥ ਵਾ ॥ ਪ੍ਰਸਾਦਿ ॥ ਕਿਆ-ਮੰਦਰ ਆਸਿਯਾਨ ਰੂਪ ਹੈ ॥ ਭਾਵ ਪਵਿਤ੍ਰ ਹੈ ॥ ਵਾ ॥ ਗੁਰ ਪ੍ਰਸਾਦਿ ॥ ਗੁਰ ॥ ਕਹੀਐ ਬਡਾ ਹੈ ॥ ਪ੍ਰਸਾਦਿ ॥ ਕਹੀਐ ਮੰਦਰ ਜਿਸ ਕਾ ਬੈਠੁਨ ਰੂਪੀ ॥ ਵਾ ॥ ਗੁਰ ॥ ਕਹੀਐ ਬਡੀ ਹੈ ॥ ਪ੍ਰਸਾਦਿ ॥ ਕਹੀਐ ਪ੍ਰਸੰਨਤਾ ਜਿਸਕੀ ਭਾਵ ਦਇਆ ਜਿਸ ਕੀ ॥' *Op. cit.*, p. 7.

136. ...ਉਸਦੀ ਹੋਂਦ ਆਪਣੇ ਆਪ ਤੋਂ ਹੋਈ ਹੈ। (ਉਹ ਹੀ ਮੇਰਾ ਗੁਰੂ ਹੈ) (ਮੈਂ) ਐਸੇ ਗੁਰੂ ਦੀ ਕਿਰਪਾ ਨਾਲ (ਇਹ ਕੁਝ ਕਿਹਾ ਹੈ ਤਬਾ ਅੱਗੋਂ ਕਹਿਣ ਜਾਂ ਲਿਖਣ ਲੱਗਾ ਹਾਂ) *Jap(u) Ji Sandesh*, p. 13.

137. ਗੁਰ ਪ੍ਰਸਾਦ ਵਸਤੁ ਨਿਰਦੇਸ ਮੰਗਲਾਚਰਨ ਹੈ ਜੋ ਗੁਰ (ਪਰਮਾਤਮਾ) ਦੀ ਹਮ ਪਰ ਕ੍ਰਿਪਾ ਹੋਵੈ। *Jap(u) Prakāsh*, pp. 14-15.

tradition of placing *bismillah* at the head of any writing, explains, *gur prasād(i)* as, "I begin with the grace of the Guru whose attributes have been given from *Ik Oankār* to *saibham*." ¹³⁸ According to Bhai Vir Singh, ¹³⁹ Sahib Singh, ¹⁴⁰ Parmanand, ¹⁴¹ and a number of earlier scholars, such as Har Ji ¹⁴² and Anad Ghan, ¹⁴³ *gur prasād(i)* means that God is achievable through the grace of the Guru. Nihal Singh Suri explains *gur prasād(i)* as "God can be attained through the Guru (namely Sri Satiguru Nanak Dev Ji) only." ¹⁴⁴ For Trumpp, the *mool* mantra ends at '*saibham*' and '*gur prasād(i)*' is in the nature of a second invocation: "By the favour of the Guru," ¹⁴⁵ the first being, *Om* ! Dr. Gopal Singh places full stop after *gur* which he translates as "the Enlightener" and carries *prasād(i)* to the beginning of the *mantra*, so that his translation reads as "By Grace of the One Supreme Being...The Enlightener." ¹⁴⁶ The UNESCO translators render *gur prasād(i)* as "by the grace of the Guru, made known to men." ¹⁴⁷ Khushwant Singh translates the compound as "by the Guru's grace shalt thou worship Him," ¹⁴⁸ Macauliffe translates *gur prasād(i)* as "by the favour of the Guru," ¹⁴⁹ but as he explains it in a foot-note, he does it under a sort of duress. He says :

"We have translated these words in deference to the opinions of the majority of the Sikhs; but with several learned gīānīs, we have no doubt that they were intended as epithets of God, the great and bountiful." ¹⁵⁰

138. ਉਸ ਗੁਰ ਦੀ ਕਿਰਪਾ ਨਾਲ (ਆਰੰਭ ਕਰਦਾ ਹੈ) ਜਿਸ ਦੇ ਗੁਣ "ੴ" ਤੋਂ ਲੈ ਕੇ 'ਸੈਭੰ' ਤਕ ਦਿੱਤੇ ਹਨ। *Op.cit.*, p. 40.

139. ਗੁਰ ਪ੍ਰਸਾਦਿ=ਗੁਰ ਦੀ ਕ੍ਰਿਪਾ ਦੁਆਰਾ ਪ੍ਰਾਪਤ ਹੁੰਦਾ ਹੈ। *Op.cit.*, p. 32.

140. ਗੁਰੂ ਦੀ ਕਿਰਪਾ ਨਾਲ (ਮਿਲਦਾ ਹੈ) *Op.cit.*, p. 47.

141. *Op.cit.*, p. 29.

142. "ਓਰ ਸਤਿਗੁਰੂ ਕੇ ਪਰਸਾਦਿ ਪਾਈਐ— *Janam Sakhi Sri Guru Nanak Dev Ji*, Vol. II, p. 262.

143. 'ਜੇ ਗੁਰ ਕ੍ਰਿਪਾ ਕਰੇ ਤਬੀ ਤੋ ਪ੍ਰਮੇਸਵਰ ਕੀ ਪ੍ਰਾਪਤਿ ਹੋਵੇ... *Op.cit.*, p. 107.

144. ਕੇਵਲ (ਸ੍ਰੀ ਸਤਿਗੁਰੂ ਨਾਨਕ ਦੇਵ ਜੀ) ਗੁਰੂ ਦੁਆਰਾ ਪ੍ਰਾਪਤ ਹੋ ਸਕਦਾ ਹੈ। *Op.cit.*, p. 7.

145. *Loc.cit.*

146. *Loc.cit.*

147. *Loc.cit.*

148. *Loc.cit.*

149. *Loc.cit.*

150. *Ibid.*, (fn. 4).

With this we come to those who regard *gur* and *prasād(i)* as two separate units. *Gur* has been interpreted as one who spreads light (of knowledge) in the darkness (of ignorance),¹⁵¹ is greater than all others,¹⁵² is consciousness incarnate¹⁵³ and is worshippingable,¹⁵⁴ while *prasād(i)* has been understood to mean sitting with tranquility,¹⁵⁵ propitiatory food,¹⁵⁶ above all sensual tastes,¹⁵⁷ everybody's resort like a temple,¹⁵⁸ delight and compassion,¹⁵⁹ 'Grace on all'¹⁶⁰ and free from impurities of form, colour, caste, creed and ignorance.¹⁶¹

III

It is evident from the foregoing survey that a category of scholars has always been in the habit of receiving messages of their own choice from a given text, unmindful of what the author might have intended to communicate. We all know that in its connotative function, religious language differs substantially from the lay idiom; we also know that with the passage of time, languages undergo morphological and semantic changes and further, that newly acquired connotations are often retrospectively imposed, consciously or unconsciously, upon old meaningful linguistic units. Such facts only rubricate the imperativeness of considering religious texts, or for that matter any old text, in the original contexts only. Some obviously funny distortions, in the interpretation of *mool mantra*, can be easily traced to the non-observance of the contextual rule. Whether the confounding multiplicity of interpretations has been

151. ਅਗਿਆਨ ਕੇ ਨਸ਼ਟ ਕਰਿ ਜੇ ਗਿਆਨ ਦੇਇ ਸੋ ਗੁਰੁ ॥ Bhai Santokh Singh, *op.cit.*, p. 140

152. ਸਾਰਿਆਂ ਤੋਂ ਗੁਰ-ਵਡਾ ਹੈ ॥ Sant Kirpal Singh *op.cit.*, p. 92

153. ਗੁਰੁ ॥ ਕਹੀਐ ਚੈਤਨ ਰੂਪ ਹੈ ॥ Gian Singh Giani, *op.cit.*, p. 7

154. ਪ੍ਰਸਾਦ ਹੈ ਅਰੁ ਵਡਾ ਹੈ ॥ Giani Badan Singh, et al., *op.cit.*, p. 3

155. ਪ੍ਰਸਾਦਿ ਦੇ ਅਰਥ ਬੈਠਣਾ ਹੈ ॥ ਜਦੋਂ ਜਗਿਆਸੂ ਦੀ ਮਨ ਬੁਧੀ ਵਿੱਚੋਂ ਤਮੇ ਦਾ ਹਨੇਰਾ ਤੇ ਰੋਜ਼ ਦੀ ਭਟਕਣਾ ਮੁੱਕ ਜਾਂਦੀ ਹੈ ॥ Satbir Singh, *Jap(u) Te Uhade Pakkh*, p. 5

156. ਭੋਭਾਰਾ ॥ Gian Singh Giani, *loc.cit.*

157. ਸੁਆਦਾਂ ਤੋਂ ਪਰੇ ਹੈ ॥ Sant Kirpal Singh, *loc.cit.*

158. ਮੰਦਰ ਕੀ ਨਿਆਇ ਸਾਰਿਆਂ ਦਾ ਅਧਿਸ਼ਠਾਨ ਰੂਪ ਹੈ ॥ *Ibid.*

159. ਪ੍ਰਸਾਦਿ ਨਾਮ ਪ੍ਰਸੰਨਤਾ ਕੋ ਭੀ ਹੈ ਦਯਾ ਭੀ ਹੈ ॥ Bhai Santokh Singh, *op.cit.*, p. 14

160. Wazir Singh, *loc.cit.*

161. ਪ੍ਰਸਾਦਿ ਕਹੀਐ ਸੰਪੂਰਣ ਚਕ੍ਰ ਚਿਹਨ ਬਰਣ ਜਾਤ ਪਾਤਾ ਦੀ ਕਾਰਯਮਲ ਔ ਅਗਿਆਨ ਰੂਪ ਕਾਰਣ ਮਲ ਤੇ ਰਹਿਤ ਹੋਨੇ ਤੇ ਸੁਖ ਹੈ ॥ Tara Singh Narottam, *op.cit.*, p. 29

due to the old calligraphic system or the misappropriation of the functions of a lexicographer by the exegetists and the commentary-writers or the weakness of the annotator-commentators to indulge in scholastic exhibitionism or even due to the sheer ignorance of the person trying his incompetent hand at a work which is much beyond his reach, the situation as it obtains today, is anything but satisfactory and poses a big challenge to Sikh scholarship. In fact, it was this challenge which prompted the writer to convene a get-together of scholars of Sikh studies so that they might arrive at a consensus about the ideological implications of the *mool mantra*. The differences do exist but it is difficult not to have a feeling that the re-interpretation of the whole Sikh Scripture is around the corner. This may or may not come about in actual practice. The writer is of the firm opinion that the key is available or, at least, can be reforged from the Sikh Scripture itself, which is the repository, not only of the complete works of Guru Nanak but also of five of his successors. It is in the Scripture that we come across almost all the constituents of the *mool mantra* used severally and collectively. Similarly, Bhai Gurdas's work is another important source, contemporaneous with the Scripture, which should have been exploited thoroughly for dependable material on the subject. It is indeed surprising that no interpreter has ever thought of exploring fully these obvious sources. These have been used only as corroborative evidences and never as primary sources.

India's Debt to Guru Nanak*

Guru Nanak's containment in the popular Indian mind as the Guru of one community—the Sikhs—has been responsible for the lack of proper appreciation of the great debt that the Indian nation, as a whole, owes him.

If someone were to analyse the annual tributes paid to Guru Nanak by leaders of Indian public opinion, one is likely to discover that they all talk of a quietist saint who preached fatherhood of God and brotherhood of man, just like all other saints. More often than not, such tributes sound hollow because the adulatory epithets used in them are almost always the same, whether the subject be Kabir or Jamboji Maharaj or Aurnagiri Nathar or Nanak.

The same stock treatment is meted out to Guru Nanak by the painters who visualize him, usually, as a saint who looks like refusing to open his eyes to the world around him. Agreed, that in the absence of any authentic contemporary portraits, the image of Guru Nanak, to be painted by our artists, has to be imaginary. But if draw they must, is it necessary that instead of drawing the Guru's contours on the basis of impressions gathered from the study of his own compositions and near-contemporary literature or even from his impact on subsequent history of India, his personality be forced to approximate itself to the artist's arbitrary view of what a traditional Indian saint should look like? Whether old or modern, such stock paintings have never impressed me and shall, I hope, never impress discerning people because they have no semblance to the real personality which they claim to portray.

It is my firm belief that Guru Nanak, as he emerges from his

* Reproduced from *The Sikh Review*, Nov. 1983, Kolkata, Vol. XXXI, No. 359.

poetical works or from the imprints that he has left on the post-Nanakian history, is a class by himself and not just another saint among a host of medieval saints and social reformers. On merit, therefore, he deserves to be treated as an independent historical phenomenon, like the Buddha.

Guru Nanak's claim to uniqueness lies, firstly, in his clinical findings relating to the ailment from which medieval human material in India suffered, and secondly in the recipe which he prepared to restore the patient's health and to bring about complete rejuvenation. The ailment, according to the Guru's diagnosis, was that man had come to accept his wretchedness as inevitable and unalterable completely forgetting his divine descent.

Other medieval saints would have suggested that in order to make man's insufferable wretchedness sufferable, heavy doses of deterministic devotional submissiveness be administered till the normal responses of the patient to the world around him get completely dulled. Guru Nanak's method, on the other hand, was to restore normalcy to all of the man's faculties so that he could react to given situations as a sane, normal, and healthy person and, if he found it necessary, might change them to his advantage, rather than go on accepting them as inexorable. The recipe which he prescribed had, besides other ingredients, three unusual ones :

- (i) honour,
- (ii) social commitment, and
- (iii) organization

Guru Nanak said : "O' my mind you must know your real origin; you are Divine Light incarnate." (*Sri Gurū Granth Sāhib*, p. 441) With such faith in the divinity of man, it was natural for the Guru to equate self-respect with life itself. He has left it on record that "life at the cost of one's honour is not worth living." (p. 142). His concern with *patt*, i. e., honour, was so great that we find this word occurring almost at every other page of his voluminous work. Refreshingly surprising is his extension of the concept of personal honour to the honour of his country. He showers abuses on the ruling house of Lodis, when he refers to the humiliation suffered by

India at the hands of Babar's hordes because they (the Lodis) had failed to modernize India's defences in time. "While the Lodis marshalled their elephants, the Mughals opened their attack with canons." (p. 418).

Undoubtedly, the whole Cosmic Drama was being staged by a Central Cosmic Will, but the Guru took pains to press home the point that there was enough scope for free initiative, noble or ignoble. All activity that tended to confine the area of man's freedom to the station of sensual requirements only ultimately led to moral and spiritual destruction and eternal damnation. On the other hand, all efforts to outgrow selfishness by engaging oneself in social welfare, so as to make life worth living everywhere and for everybody with voluntary and hard co-operative labour, would lead man to the path of moral and spiritual upliftment.

Social commitment, naturally, led to organization of like-minded persons into well-knit *sangats*—local bodies, at the grass-root level.

The administration of Guru's medicine made all the difference in restoring India's socio-political health. Anyone who cares to study the evolution of local Sikh congregation into the fighting *dals* of the *Khalsa panth* and the substitution of the baptism of *Sikh pahul* with the *Singh amrita*, resulting in the complete destruction of the grand Mughal empire, will testify to the efficacy of Guru Nanak's prescription.

It may not be possible to say exactly what course Indian history would have taken, had Guru Nanak not appeared on the scene, but the tremendous difference between the pre-Nanakian 'why-should-I-bother?' individualistic and cynical attitude of the Indian people towards such situations as involved the honour of women folk and the freedom of the country, and the post-Nanakian attitude of commitment, exhibited by his followers, cannot just be overlooked. "If a physically strong person were to hit down another equally strong person, I would not mind it at all, but if a powerful lion were to pounce upon herd of cows..." (*Srī Gurū Granth Sāhib*, p. 360) well, that is a scene which evokes a qualitatively different response from

the onlooker. Such was the lesson that Guru Nanak's followers were taught to heed and that made all the difference.

The difference was absolutely clear to the perceptive mind of Dr. Sir Muhammad Iqbal, the Philosopher of the East, when he bemoaned in no uncertain terms that the triumphant march of Islam would have proceeded unhampered in India, but for the intervention of the Khalsa, "who took away the sword and the Quran with the result that Islam met its death in the Punjab." (*Jāved Nāmāh*)

If I do not know how to stand up manfully against injustice and oppression and somebody teaches me to do so, his contribution towards my build-up would be unforgettable, at least for me. This is exactly what Guru Nanak did for the whole of India. He tried to change Indian's psychology; he trained the Indian mind's instinctive reactions not to behave indifferently in situations involving honour. In fact, he metamorphosed the very springs of Indian thought. It is this basic inspiration to which India can trace its freedom.

Does then, Guru Nanak deserve to be lumped together with other medieval saints as just one of them, to be painted with eyes permanently half-closed ? My reply would be an emphatic No.

Ādi Granth : The Sikh Scripture*

Ādi Granth is the short title of the sacred book of the Sikhs, *Ādi Srī Gurū Granth Sāhib* (*Ādi*, Skt., first, original, earliest; *Srī*, Skt. *Sriman*, honorific prefix; *Guru*, Skt., *Guru*, dispeller of darkness, spiritual guide; *Granth*, book; *Sāhib*, Master, used here as an honorific suffix). Rendered into English the full title reads : *The Most Revered and the Original Guru : The Magnum Opus*. Some abbreviated variants of the title are also in common use, viz., *Srī Gurū Granth Sāhib*, *Gurū Granth Sāhib*, *Granth Sāhib*, *Gurū Granth* and *Ādi Granth*, although the original title of the book, compiled in 1604 by Guru Arjan Dev, the fifth Guru of the Sikhs, was simply *pothī* (Skt. *Pustakah*; Pali *pothaka* book or manuscript). Kesar Singh Chhibber's *Bansāvalī Nāmā Dasān Pātsāhīān Kā* gives 1601 as the date of the compilation. The use of prefix 'Guru' with the *Granth* dates back to 1708 when the Tenth Guru of the Sikhs, Gobind Singh (1666-1708), chose to put a stop to the line of human Gurus, updated Guru Arjan's *pothī* by inserting the works of his father, the Ninth Guru, Tegh Bahadur, and nominated the augmented Book as his eternal successor. Overnight, the Book became the Guru. The *pothī* acquired the highly exalted status of *Srī Gurū Granth Sāhib*, "the ever-living, ever-awake, wish-fulfilling, boon-bestowing, embodiment of all the Ten Gurus, the abode of God, the spiritual protector of the Sikhs in this world and the next" (a part of the formal Sikh Prayer). Since its installation as the Guru, the Sikhs have always extended to this corpus all imaginable respect that is usually offered to the living *gurus*. Whenever a Sikh happens to pass by it, he bows

* Reproduced from Encyclopaedia of Indian Literature with the permission of Sahitya Akademi, New Delhi.

his head towards it. Not even a child is allowed to turn his back or feet towards it. Every person wishing to enter the premises of its abode, the Gurdwārā (Skt. Guruduar) has to cover his head and take off his shoes as a token of respect towards its august presence. Prayers are offered, supplications are made and offerings are respectfully presented by standing before it as faithfuls, with bowed heads and folded hands.

The use of the adjective 'Ādi', before the *Granth* was introduced to distinguish the *Gurū Granth* from another voluminous anthology, known as *Dasam Granth* (Skt. Dashama—Tenth), *The Tenth Book*, which, in fact, is an abbreviation of *Dasham Guru ka Granth* or *The Book of the Tenth Master*, namely, Guru Gobind Singh.

The *Ādi Granth* is the most lavishly bedecked, the most richly apparelled, the most magnificently-housed, the most demonstrably venerated and the most ceremoniously apotheosized book of all times and places. It may be seen presiding, as a matter of daily routine, over all religious gatherings and most of the social and even political get-togethers of the Sikhs. A Sikh marriage has no legal sanction unless the *Gurū Granth* sanctifies and validates it, by being physically present in the centre of the ceremony.

The original compiler-cum-editor of the *Granth*, Guru Arjan Dev, was the fourth successor of the founder of Sikhism, Guru Nanak. Culturally, Guru Arjan Dev was one of the most well-connected personages of his time—the daughter of the Third Guru, Amar Das, Bibi Bhani, was his mother and the Fourth Guru, Ram Das, was his father. His maternal grandfather, Guru Amar Das and his father, Guru Ram Das, were influential leaders of men and have left for posterity their complete poetical works, now preserved in the *Gurū Granth*. His maternal uncle, Bhai Gurdas, was also an eminent poet of the Punjabi and Braj languages. His elder brother, Prithi Chand also dabbled in poetry, while his nephew Manohar Das and his son Har Ji were prolific writers of prose and poetry. Guru Arjan Dev, thus, grew up in an atmosphere of intense literary and religious culture. Early in life, he flowered into a major writer in the field of devotional poetry. Among other important contributions made by

him to the nascent Sikh religious movement, during his tenure of guruship, one was that of giving a practical shape to the idea, already floating among the small but well-knit Sikh community, of having their own independent sacred book. Once his mind was made up, the 'Operation *Pothi*' was undertaken on a war-footing. A regular camp was set up at a shaded place, which he named as Ramsar, not very far from the well-known Harimandir, now known as Golden Temple, in the present city of Amritsar. He had with him all the literary material that had been transferred to him by his father, as a part of the office of guruship, but he also deputed a number of field researchers to tap, verify and collect the material believed to be in the custody of some well-known and not so-well-known people. As soon as the material had been collected, he went through the whole of it, critically sifting the genuine from the fake and dotting, as it were, the i's and crossing the t's thereof. A telling proof of this love's labour is still extant in the words '*sudh(u)*' (Skt. '*suddha*', correct) at the end of certain compositions (cf. pp. 91, 150, 475, 517 and 524 of *Ādi Granth*) and '*Sudh(u) kīchai*', "please make corrections (as indicated)" in at least one case (cf. p. 323). He rejected straightaway every composition that did not conform to *Gurmat* (Skt. *Gurumat*), the Guru Ideology. His scholar-uncle, Bhai Gurdas, had associated with the project, from the very beginning. In fact, the entire work of preparing the final authorized copy, on the basis of the material, verified and corrected by the Guru, was left to him.

After the completion of the 'Operation *Pothi*', the Book was ceremoniously installed in the Harimandir, the Temple of God, which rises lotus-like from Amritsar, the Pool of Immortality, the pool to which the famous city of Amritsar in the Punjab owes its name. The venerable Bābā Buḍḍha, one of the surviving followers of Guru Nanak, was nominated as its First Keeper. The compilation of the '*Pothi*' was an event of great religio-philosophical, socio-cultural, and literary import. Its impact on the course of Indian history, through the role played by its believers, was destined to be tremendous.

The contents of the *Granth* may be notionally divided into two

parts, the main part consisting of devotional-cum-ethical-cum-philosophical hymns and the other part consisting of a few laudatory compositions, which also serve as documentary evidence left by the Bhattas and Dooms, the traditional Keepers of Records, relating to genealogy and successions against spurious claimants of the Guru's office. Actually, however, there are three parts—the Liturgical Part, the Musical Part and the Miscellaneous Part. The liturgical part opens with the basic credal formula, called the *mūl mantra* (Skt. 'moolam', root). It is followed by Guru Nanak's well-known composition, the *Jap(u)* which is recited by the devout Sikhs daily in the early morning, along with the *mūl mantra*. Out of the next set of three compositions, *So dar(u)*, *So purakh(u)* and *Sohilā*, the first two are expected to be recited by every Sikh around sunset and the last, i.e., *Sohilā* immediately before going to bed. Except for the last hymn of *Sohilā*, all the other 14 hymns, comprising *So dar(u)* (5 nos.), *So purakh(u)* (4 nos.) and *Sohilā* (5 nos.) have been picked up from the main body of the Granth, for daily liturgical purposes. Then follows the main body of the text—extending over 1340 pages, out of a total of 1430 standardized pages, each composition of which is meant to be sung in the prescribed 'rāga', preferably to the accompaniment of instrumental music. All the hymns of this part are arranged under 31 *rāga*-heads in the following order :

Srī (pp 14 to 93); *Mājh* (pp 94 to 150); *Gaurī* (pp 151 to 346); *Āsā* (pp 347 to 488); *Gūjarī* (pp 480 to 526); *Dev Gaṇdhārī* (pp 527 to 536); *Bihāg* (pp 537 to 556); *Vaḍahaṇs* (pp 557 to 594); *Sorath* (pp. 595 to 659); *Dhanāsarī* (pp 660 to 695); *Jaitsarī* (pp 696 to 710); *Toḍī* (pp 711 to 718); *Bairārī* (pp 719 to 720); *Tilāṅg* (pp 721 to 727); *Sūhī* (pp 728 to 794); *Bilāwal* (pp 795 to 858); *Gauṇḍ* (pp 859 to 875); *Rāmkalī* (pp 876 to 974); *Nat Nārāin* (pp 975 to 983); *Mālī Gaurā* (pp 984 to 988); *Mārū* (pp 989 to 1106); *Tukhārī* (pp 1107 to 1117); *Kedārā* (pp 1118 to 1124) ; *Bhairo* (pp 1125 to 1167) ; *Basant* (pp 1168 to 1196); *Sāraṅg* (pp 1197 to 1253) ; *Malhār* (pp 1254 to 1293) ; *Kānarā* (pp 1294 to 1318) ; *Kalyān* (pp 1319 to 1326); *Prabhātī* (pp 1327 to 1351) and *Jaijāvantī* (pp 1352 to 1353).

In the 'Pothi', i.e. the original manuscript compiled by Guru Arjan Dev, there were thirty *rāgas* in the same order. The thirty-first *rāga*, *Jaijāvantī*, contains only the compositions of Guru Tegh Bahadur, the Ninth Guru of the Sikhs. These were added to the 'Pothi' by Guru Gobind Singh under this *rāga*.

The arrangement of material in the Musical Part is rather complex but, by and large, uniformity having been observed throughout, it is easy to understand the compiler's system. While it is on the basis of musical measures that this Part has been divided into different chapters, the placement of individual compositions has been done on the twin bases of authorship and metrical form. Besides this, each *rāga* has been sub-divided into Guru and non-Guru sections. The Guru section has been arranged on the basis of the inter-se order of the Gurus. In the non-Guru section, Kabīr always gets the pride of place. Apart from maintaining the inter-se position of the contributors, the other inter-se arrangement, based on the poetical form of the contribution, has also been simultaneously followed. For instance, the first place is always given to 'Chaupadas' (quadrustanzaic hymns), followed, seriatim, by 'Astapadis' (octostanzaic hymns), *Chhants* (hymns with variable number of stanzas), ending with *Vārs* (odes). The last Part, i.e., the miscellaneous part, contains various metrical compositions not set to any musical measure. These, in serial order, are Guru Nanak's and Guru Arjan Dev's *Salokas* in Sahaskriti idiom; *Gāthā*, *Phunahe*, and *Chaubole* by Guru Arjan Dev; the *Salokas* of Kabīr and Sheikh Farid; the *Sawayyās* of Guru Arjan Dev, and the *Sawayyās* by the Bhattas in honour of the first five Gurus, *Salokas* by the First, Third, Fourth, Fifth, and Ninth Gurus and at the end, the *Rāgamālā*—a composition around the authenticity of which has been raging a bitter controversy among the Sikh intelligentsia and which appears to be one of the earliest unauthorized interpolations.

The *Guru Granth* contains the complete or selected works of thirty-five persons, hailing from different parts of India and belonging to different castes and creeds. They may be divided into four different categories, namely, (a) the Gurus, (b) the Bhagats (Skt.

bhakta), (c) the panegyrists, and (d) the one-man category of Sundar, believed to be a descendant of the Third Guru.

While the name of each contributor is prominently given at the top of each category of his work in the *Ādi Granth* in categories (b), (c) and (d), the contributors in category (a) are identified as *Mahilā* I, '*Mahilā*' II, '*Mahilā*' III, '*Mahilā*' IV, '*Mahilā*' V' and '*Mahilā* IX', which stand for the First, Second, Third, Fourth, Fifth, and the Ninth Guru respectively.

Another fact, non-attention to which has been making the unwary commit serious mistakes about the authorship of the Guru-compositions, is that all the six Gurus whose works are preserved in the *Ādi-Granth*, use Nanak as their nom-de-plume. The category 'A' consists of the works of six Gurus, whose names are Nanak Dev (1469 – 1539), Angad Dev (1504-1552), Amar Das (1479 – 1574), Ram Das (1534 – 1581), Arjan Dev (1563-1606), and Tegh Bahadur (1621–1675). Category 'B' comprises the Bhagats, namely, Kabir (Muslim weaver of Kashi, 1398–1495); Trilochan (1267-?); Nāmdēv (1270-1350, Calico-printer of Maharashtra); Ravidas (1267-1335, leather-worker of Kashi); Sheikh Farid (1178-1271, a Muslim Sufi of West-Punjab); Beni (not known), Dhanna (b. 1415, Jat peasant of Rajasthan); Jaideva (1201-1245, Brahmin of Bengal); Bhikhan (1480-1573, Muslim of U.P.); Parmanand (date not known, Maharashtra); Sain (14th-15th centuries, Barber from Rajasthan); Pīpā (b. 1425, Rajasthan); Sadhnā (date not known, Muslim of Sindh, Pakistan); Rāmānanda (1366-1467, Brahmin of U.P.) and Sūrdās (b. 1258, Brahmin of U.P.). In category 'C' may be included the panegyrists, namely, Balwand; Kal or Kalas-har; Jalap; Kirat; Bhikha; Salya; Bhalya; Nalya; Gayand; Mathura; Balya, and Harbans—all Bhattas and one Doom, namely Satta, who shares the authorship of a *Vār* with Balwand, the Bhatt. The Bhattas have written laudatory verses in honour of the first five Gurus. With Sundar added to the list, the total number of contributors to the Sikh Scripture adds up to 35. Two salokas (*Ādi Granth*, 553) of Guru Nanak in *Rāga Bihāgarā* are found in the name of Mardana (Musician of West Punjab 1459–1534), Guru Nanak's companion during his journeys. According to the late scholar Dr. Mohan Singh Dewana, however,

Mardana is the name of a musical or poetical pattern and is not the name of a person.

While at one level, the Sikh scripture is the continuation of medieval India's powerful socio-religious movement called 'bhagati' (Skt., bhakti), at another, it is a complete departure from it. For example, it agrees with the 'bhagats' who believe in the existence of a single, conscious all-pervading, all-surmounting Being, the ground of all phenomena, but it does not agree with those who found it necessary to worship Him in any personified or 'avatar' form. It shares with the 'bhagats' the view that the essential characteristics of all phenomenal existence is transience, but it differs from those who made this fact an excuse to run away from familial and other worldly responsibilities. It is one with the 'bhagats' in holding that it is the devotee's imperative necessity to have a Guru in order to realize the numinous reality within one's lifetime, but it does not rule out the possibility of direct contact with the Creator, either through the courtesy of His grace or as a reward for the seeker's devotion. It looks upon with approbation the bhagat's inward journey for discovery of one's self, but it lays equal emphasis on disciplined organization of man's corporate socio-political life on non-exploitative, egalitarian basis. It outdid the 'bhagats' in making personal and social mortality as the basic condition of spiritual growth, although according to one of its basic metaphysical postulates, both good and evil, ultimately, flowed from the same and the only divine source, namely, God.

The Granth is neither a text book of theology nor of philosophy; it is a poetical and musical tribute to the Creator by a community of devout poets. It is a devotional hymn-book composed with the specific purpose of celebrating the multifarious qualities of the Lord and while doing this, all types of problems, physical and metaphysical, come to be discussed occasionally, pointedly and mostly in passing. There are compositions, such as *Siddh Gost* by Guru Nanak which concern themselves with specific cosmological, epistemological, ontological and/or ethical problems and it is from these and other similar compositions that a coherent view of the Guru philosophy is formed. For example, the Granthian God is

immanent and transcendent at the same time. He is beyond human comprehension, but it is experienceable and realizable. Having created the universe with a bang, He runs the staggeringly massive show through universally-operative scientific principles (*hukam, bhai*), the inexorability of which gives way to none but His will (*bhānā, razā*). He responds to prayers, rewards the devotees, and punishes the defaulters. Man, the acme of all creation, is mortal, but is capable of achieving immortality. Predetermination is qualified by the moral responsibility that goes with self-determination. It is man's emancipation from the shackles of space and time, achievable through regulated personal, social, and spiritual conduct, with which the *Granth* concerns itself the most. The *Granth* lays great emphasis on the meditative remembrance of the nominative identity of the divine impulse (*nām*), the desirability and unity of mystic experience, strict control over psycho-somatic passions of libido, ire, avarice, attachment, and ego to bring about equipoise (*sahaja*) and balance. It does not accept the sacrificial system of atonement; it rejects all superstitions such as magic, ritual, miracle, pilgrimages, and purificatory baths. It is, in short, a simple, workable, and practical type of humanism which lays emphasis on equality of man, fraternal get-togetherness, social service, and shared wealth. Its message is universal and totally devoid of any sectarian bias.

Like all other major scriptures of the world, the *Granth* has also served as an agent of social enlightenment and progress. It has served as a booster to the habit of reading and writing in a country in which even the three R's very rarely reached the lower strata of society. It has encouraged people to work hard, engage in honest production of wealth, concede an honourable social status to women folk and develop respect for the rights of others. It refused to grant any spiritual or religious significance to the system of 'sati' at a time when it was a respected custom. It induced people to abstain from intoxicants, larceny, adultery, bribery, exploitation, duplicity, prevarication, and haughtiness. God-fearing citizens with such qualities will naturally form good members of society, provided the administrative machinery is not anti-people or oppressive and is

just—the qualities without which, according to the *Granth*, no administration is worth its name.

The Granthian postulate that the contingent nature of the physical world notwithstanding, it has to be treated as a solidly real extension of the divine entity, has put a distinctive stamp on the life-style of its followers. They love to live cheerfully, remain physically fit and instead of complaining, make quick adjustments with their circumstances. They never take to the begging bowl, nor do they turn into recluses. On the other hand, they prefer to engage themselves in productive work, however hard it may be, and strive to raise further their existing standards of living.

The *Ādi Granth* must be given some credit for architectural enrichment of the world also. It is not the Golden Temple at Amritsar alone which elicits high appreciation from the spiritual seeker and the tourist alike, a number of eye-catching edifices built to house the *Granth* may be seen in almost all countries in which the believers in the *Granth* have settled in substantial numbers.

The influence of the *Granth* on post-*Granth* India's political history has not been fully realized yet, although it is this book, more than any other, which seems to have been thrown up by the Indian mind as a sort of indigenous defiance against further penetration of the semitic-Islamic cultural onslaught, which was downing, one by one, the different provinces of Northern India. By the time the *Granth* appeared on the scene, North Western Frontier Province, Baluchistan, Sindh, Western Punjab, and Kashmir had been almost completely subjugated not only politically but also culturally. The remaining parts of Northern India, starting with Eastern Punjab, would have been similarly submerged if the phenomenon of Guru Nanak had not appeared in the 15th century. It was he who propounded for the Indian people the uncompromising principle of *patt*, i.e., honour. Says Guru Nanak in the *Granth* (p. 142), "If you have to live at the cost of your honour, each morsel that goes down your gullet is like forbidden food for you !"

It is difficult for such exhortations to go unheeded when the *Granth* is regarded as the living Guru by its followers. A slow but qualitative change in the instinctive response of the Indian mind

against political and cultural suppression and injustice is clearly visible if the course of post-Nanak Indian history is perceptively observed.

It is interesting to view the vast panorama of history as it unfolded itself in the Middle East through the medium of script. Since the time of Caliph Umar, the educational policy of the Muslims towards their conquered lands did not put any hurdle in the way of Muslim settlers and converts using local or national languages, provided these were written in Arabic script. Persian, Uzbek, Tajik, Turkish, Pashto, Baluchi, Sindhi, Western Punjabi (Lahandi), Kashmiri, and Hindi are some of the languages which were extensively put in use by the Muslim writers. In fact, they were as good as pioneers in almost all these languages, but in each case, Arabic or modified Arabic script was used with the result that their original scripts alongwith the bulk of indigenous literary and cultural treasures preserved in those scripts were lost for good. Guru Nanak did not want this ancient land of his to be cut off completely from its cultural roots. He, therefore, decided to use the local script, later called Gurmukhī, for all his work. Thereafter, Gurmukhī script became the script of culturally resurgent and identity-conscious Punjab, tracing its roots to its own country rather than to Arabia or any other foreign land. Naturally, the script chosen for the *Ādi Granth* was Gurmukhī. Consequently, almost the whole of non-Muslim literature produced in the Punjab before the arrival of Arya Samaj in this region was written in Gurmukhī script, irrespective of the language used. Now it is a well-known fact of history that it was the Gurmukhī-knowing followers of the *Granth*, who, in course of time, struck a fatal blow to the Mughal empire. The Poet of the East, Muhammad Iqbal, confirms this fact indirectly when he bemoans, in another context, the decay of Islam in his *Jāved Nāmāh* : (From the heart of the Muslim disappeared the shining dynamism of mercury : who does not know what happened in the Punjab ? The Khalsa (i.e. the Sikhs) carried away the sword and the *Qurān* and that is how Islam died in this land). The inspiration behind this remarkable turn of events of India may be traced unmistakably to

the fear-removing, self-respecting, activist philosophy of the *Granth*.

In the same way, the literary and linguistic influence of the *Ādi Granth*, enshrining in its body the most representative devotional work of the whole of Aryan India of over 500 years, could not but be far-reaching and infectious. Thousands of its hand-written copies were in circulation before the introduction of the printing press; its recitation in homes and prayer-houses was a daily affair and some of its selected compositions were sung in the Gurdwārās every morning and evening. It is, therefore, not difficult to understand why its influence was so pervasive in the whole region, extending roughly between the rivers Sind and Yamuna. The religious books in Sanskrit had come to be associated, during this period, with the dead wood of ritual. The popular mood in favour of new scriptures in the languages of the people was, therefore, already there. The impact of this particular scripture, the *Ādi Granth*, once it had come into being, was bound to be great. Apart from the orchestral play of different styles of expression, the *Ādi Granth* is a treasure-house of poetical moods, imaginative word-pictures and striking similes and metaphors.

On account of its prestige, the *Granth* had become an ideal in the eyes of leading wielders of pen, as the examples of Haria and Darbari eloquently prove. Haria or Hari Das, was the leading exponent of a small sect called 'Diwānā'. He has left his works in the form of a compilation which is called *Granth Hariā jī kā*. It begins with his own *Jap(u)*, on the pattern of the *Ādi Granth*, which opens with the *Jap(u)* of Guru Nanak, and is sub-divided on the basis of different musical measures. Hailing from the present district of Bhatinda in the Punjab, Haria flourished in the second half of the 17th century. His work which came to be regarded as the Scripture of Diwānās, is of considerable literary merit. Bhai Darbari or Darbari Das lived at Vairoke, a small village in the present Faridkot District in the Punjab. He authored a voluminous work structured mainly after the *Ādi Granth* model. The work, captioned *Harijas Pothi*, is dated 1803 and starts with the author's own *Jap(u)*. Bhai Darbari's period of active literary production lay in the second half of the 18th century. Both dictionally and thematically, the *Granth*s of Haria and Bhai Darbari are heavily indebted to the *Ādi Granth*.

These two examples out of many should be sufficient to establish that the *Ādi Granth* was able to generate a cultural climate in which people could take in hand major literary projects. It will not be an exaggeration to say that apart from certain romances and exclusively sectarian works relating to Islam and Hinduism, the bulk of prose and poetry produced in the Punjab, whether in Punjabi, Hindvi or Braj, owes its birth, partially, if not wholly, directly or indirectly, to the *Ādi Granth*. Dated prose, especially produced by Meharban School of Sikh Studies, is nothing but exegesis and exposition of the *Granthic* texts, hung often on biographical kegs. Poetry, starting with Bhai Gurdas (1551-1629), continues to exhibit, even today, the *Granthic* influence in one form or another. It is a fact that, till recently, anything written or printed in Gurmukhī script was considered to be sacred and was never trampled under feet. The position has changed a lot in favour of secularity, but writers who need to coin new words are finding the *Ādi Granth* to be an indispensable linguistic source because it represents a linguistic tradition which connects itself more with Prakrit and Apabhraṃsa than with Sanskrit. For such purposes, the *Ādi Granth* serves as a classical thesaurus, especially for such Punjabi prose writers as do not like to destroy the Prakritic character of their language in the process of equipping it adequately to cope with the advances being made by modern knowledge in all fields of life. Purely literary borrowings from the *Granth* by poets include concepts, phrases, imagery, metres, and verse-forms.

For an ampler perception of the extensive contribution of the *Ādi Granth* to the history of literary culture in the medieval Punjab, one has to view it from the stand-point of the 11th century, when the hordes of Mehmud of Ghazni (967-1033) were making the local “infidel-centres” of indigenous culture “disappear like smoke” as Abu Riḥan Al-beruni puts it graphically in his *Kitāb-ul-Hind*. The few still living custodians of the local culture, we are told, escaped, helter-skelter, either to Kashi or to Kashmir, where the conqueror had not yet been able to put his foot. That the evidence of literary creation during the quincenary following Mehmud is scanty, there is a

spurt in literary productivity which starts with Guru Nanak and culminates in the compilation of the *Ādi Granth*. In order to meet the various needs engendered by the scripture, there sprang up numerous centres of specialization in such disciplines as Calligraphy, Recitation, Exegesis, Lexicography, Poetics, Grammar, Comparative Philosophy, and Devotional Music. Thus the gap caused by Mehmud was plugged by the *Ādi Granth*.

The *Ādi Granth* is, therefore, much more than a Sikh Scripture. Besides being a valuable spiritual heritage and an epitome of wisdom, it is a compendium of great historical, socio-cultural, literary and linguistic significance.

Bhai Banno's Copy of Guru Arjan Dev's *Pothi**

It may be possible for an Indologist to work on a medieval subject without any reference to the Sikh Scripture,¹ but no scholar aspiring to become a specialist in a sizeable area of medieval *nirguṇa* devotional poetry of New Indo-Aryan (NIA) languages, may be expected to achieve his objective satisfactorily without recourse to it. Its indispensability lies in its manifold distinctions, such as its age,² its volume,³ its vast spatio-temporal span,⁴ its elaborately planned

* This paper was read and discussed in "Second International Conference on Early Devotional Literature in New Indo-Aryan Languages", held on 19-21 March 1982 at Wilhelm University, Bonn, West Germany. Reprinted in *Journal of Sikh Studies*, August, 1984, Amritsar, Guru Nanak Dev University, Vol. XI, No. II.

1. The original compilation prepared by the fifth Guru of the Sikhs, Arjan Dev, entitled *Pothi*, consisted of 34 contributors. The tenth Guru of the Sikhs, Gobind Singh, added the compositions of his father, the 9th Guru of the Sikhs, Guru Tegh Bahadur. It is the enlarged version of the original *Pothi*, which ultimately became the Sikh Scripture.
2. The compilation of the *Pothi*, the original version of what later became the Sikh Scripture, was taken in hand by Guru Arjan Dev during the closing decade of the 16th century and was finalized, according to *Bansāvalināmā* in A.D. 1601. There is another tradition which regards 1604 as the year of completion. It bases itself on Kartarpur MS of the *Pothi* and such works as *Guru Pratāpa Sūraj* and *Gurbilās Pāṭshāhī Chhēvīn*. The Scripture remains, till today, the oldest record in respect of most of its 35 contributors, whichever part of India they hailed from.
3. The standard published version of the Scripture covers 1430 pages with 19 lines per page. The total number of words comes to about half a million.
4. The Scripture enshrines the complete works of six Gurus of the Sikhs (1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 5th and 9th) and selections from the works of 29 other saint-poets—14 Bhagats, one Sufi, 12 *Bhatts*, one *Dūm* and a grandson of the Third Guru, Sundar by name. The earliest poets, Jaideva and Sekh Farid (Sheikh Farid) were the products of the 12th century, while the latest contributor, Guru Tegh Bahadur, breathed his last in 1675. Thus temporally, the Scripture represents a quincenitary of religious, philosophical, linguistic, literary and cultural history of Northern India and, ☞

layout,⁵ its literary and linguistic variety and the abundance of socio-historical material in it.

The original manuscript of this unique work, entitled *Pothī* (referred to hereafter as P1) was compiled and edited by Guru Arjan Dev (1563-1606), the fifth Guru of the Sikhs, and was scribed by Bhai Gurdas (1551-1629), a well-known Sikh savant of his time. It was this work which, after the addition of the compositions of Guru Tegh Bahadur (1621-1675), the ninth Guru of the Sikhs, was destined to attain, within the course of a century and odd years of its inception, the high status of the All-Time Guru of the Sikhs. But much before that, in fact, from the very day of its compilation, the *Pothī* (P1) had become an object of great veneration and worship. Not much time had elapsed after the demise of Guru Arjan Dev, when P1 got sucked into the private archives of Dheermall. (b. 1626 A.D.), a great-grandson of the Guru-compiler. It is claimed by Sodhi Amarjit Singh, a distant descendant of Dheermall that P1 is safely preserved in his private archives at Kartarpur, a small town in the district of Jalandhar. The late Dr. Bhai Jodh Singh made public in 1968 the result of his page-wise study of the contents of the Kartarpur MS⁶ (referred to hereafter, as P2) to lay at rest any doubts about its originality. The late Bhai Jodh

➤specially, the vast area represented by the contributors of the *Granth* extends from Sind (Sadhnā) to Maharashtra (Nāmdev) and from the Western Panjab (Farid) to Bengal (Jaideva). It presents an interesting cross-section of the Indian society from the traditional upper castes, such as Brahmins (Rāmānanda), Rajpoots (Pipā) and Khatriis (the Gurus) to such working classes as barbers (Sain), weavers (Kabīr), butchers (Sadhnā) and cobblers (Ravidas), besides peasants (Dhanna). Moreover, both major religions of India, namely, Hindu and Mussalman, are represented in it.

5. The text is divided into three parts, viz., (a) liturgical, (b) musical and (c) miscellaneous.

The musical hymn-anthology forms the major part and is divided into thirty-one sections (the number does not include the various sub-sections of the major musical measures) each section representing the musical measure in which the hymns are to be sung. These are further arranged according to their metrical forms and authorship. Each hymn is numbered and sub-totals of each part are carried forward to form the grand total. At the outset, there are two indices – the first gives the titles of the musical measures with pages and the second index gives the opening lines of all hymns with the page number at which these occur.

The orthographic system used is such that even a slight violation of rules may lead to serious semantic distortion.

6. Bhai Jodh Singh, *Srī Kartārpurī Bīr de Darshan*.

Singh's erudite effort notwithstanding, some knowledgeable quarters are convinced that, if a few glaring internal leads and some circumstantial clues are followed to their logical end, it may be difficult to agree that P1 and P2 are one and the same MS. Under the circumstances, the importance of the first direct copy of P1, said to have been made during the lifetime of the Guru-compiler, cannot be over-emphasized, in spite of the well-known fact that certain unauthorized interpolations had crept into it. This copy shall be referred to hereafter as B1.

The popular oral and written Sikh tradition traces the genesis of B1 to the initiative and ingenuity of Bhai Banno (1558-1645) of Khārā Māngaṭ, a village in the present Pakistani district of Gujarat. According to this graphic tradition, Bhai Banno was deputed by Guru Arjan to get P1 bound by some expert bookbinder of Lahore. Banno's earnest request that he be allowed to have the honour of carrying P1 to his village was granted by the Guru-compiler on the condition that he would not stay there for more than one night. Bhai Banno was scrupulous in observing this condition, but maneuvered frequent en-route halts, during which he put specially-recruited members of his retinue at work and got P1 copied from one end to the other, before reaching Lahore. Both P1 and B1 were got properly bound at Lahore and brought back to Ramdaspur (now Amritsar). Guru Arjan is reported to have put his seal of approval on Bhai Banno's labour of love by writing, with his own hand, the *mūl mantra* on one of the folios (hereafter F.) of B1. Ever since Bhai Banno formally installed it in his village, it remained there, except when it was taken to Lahore during Maharaja Ranjit Singh's time. A reference to B1's return by the British administration, after the annexation of the Punjab, to Bhais Ram Singh and Nidhan Singh of Khārā Māngaṭ, occurs in an official document preserved in the archival records of the Governments of India.⁷ After the partition of India in 1947, when the conditions became too hot for the Sikhs to remain in the then newly-formed

7. Document No. 6 – *Ādi Grānth*—1850—Political; letters dated Lahore, August, 15, 1850, from H.P. Burns, Deputy Secretary to the Board of Administration, Punjab, to Sir H.M. Elliot, Secretary to Government with the Governor General.

"...Another copy of the sacred book, the *Baba Grānth* which also come down from the time of Goroo Urjun, has been entrusted to the care of Bhais Ram Singh and Needhan Singh of Māngaṭ, who were its custodians during the time of the Darbar..."

Pakistan, B1 was shifted to Amritsar, where it lay for about one month at Bhai Jagat Singh Bannoāniā's place. From there it was taken to Baraut, a town in Merath district of Uttar Pradesh (hereafter U.P.), where one of the custodian families from Khārā Māngat, namely, Bhai Jodh Singh-Bhai Mastan Singh, had settled. B1 remained there till 1.7.1975, after which it was provided with a permanent home at Gurdwārā Bhai Banno Sahib in Kanpur (U.P.). This edifice was specially built by the faithful to house the invaluable legacy of Bhai Banno. Through the courtesy of its present enlightened custodians, I have had five day-long sittings, distributed over 3 different occasions in 1981-1982, to study the MS. I propose to share with the learned seminarians my findings about the Kanpur MS (which I shall, henceforth, refer to as B2).

Fortunately, numerous references to the contents of B1 are available in Sikh literature.⁸ These references serve not only as identifiers of B1, but also provide checking points for B2. I propose, now, to give under one column the facts relating to B1 that are provided by literature (quoted in abbreviated form in brackets⁹) and

8. I have in mind such works as *Gurbilās Pātsāhī Chhevin*, *Mahimā Prakāsh*, *Guru Pratāpa Sūraj*, *Bhāi Banno Prakāsh*, etc.

9. Each abbreviation given in brackets stands for the work noted against it :

(B) = Javahar Singh, *Bhāi Banno Prakāsh*, MS No. G. 75, Completed in *Samvat* 1929/A.D. 1872, Amritsar, G.N.D. University.

(G) = Anonymous, *Gurbilāsa Pātsāhī Chhevin*, Amritsar, BK 1944/A.D. 1887. It is claimed in the book that it was completed in BK 1775/A.D. 1718, after the hard labour of 15 months but Bhai Kahn Singh writes in a footnote on p. 353 of his *Gurmata Sudhākara*, 1922, Amritsar :

"In fact, the authors of this book are Bhai Gurmukh Singh Akalbungia and Bhai Darbara Singh Chunkiwala, both of Amritsar. It was begun in *Samvat* 1890 (A.D. 1833) and completed in *Samvat* 1900 BK (A.D. 1848)."

The Bhai quotes no authority in support of his laconic declaration. Shamsheer Singh Ashok, *Sādā Hath-likhit Panjabi Sāhit*, 1968, Amritsar, lists at p. 295, a MS of this work dated *Samvat* 1890/A.D. 1839, said to be preserved in Sikh Reference Library, Amritsar, Mr. Ashok gives the author's name as "Sohan".

(K) = Bhai Kahn Singh, *Gurmata Mārtand* (Part I), 1962, Amritsar.

(M) = Sarupdas Bhalla, *Srī Guru Mahimā Prakāsh* (Part II), 1971, Patiala, Eds. Lamba, Gobind Singh and Khazan Singh. The MS was completed in *Samvat* 1897/A.D. 1840.

(N) = Kahn Singh Nabha, *Gurushabada Ratnākara Mahān Kosh*, (2nd ed.), Patiala, 1960.

(P) = Gurbakhsh Singh, *Srī Guru Granth Sāhib diān Prāchin Bīrān*, 1944, Lahore.

give in the second column, in the same serial order, the corresponding information relating to B2, but before I do that it may be worthwhile to give B2's brief physical description :

The present MS was extensively repaired, renovated and laminated by the experts of the National Archives, New Delhi, in September, 1975. Each F. is now framed with Japanese tissue paper. The MS has a new binding. The old binding is still preserved in the Gurdwārā. The first 10 Fs. of the MS are blank. The present size of the laminated Fs. is 40½ cm x 29½ cm. Generally speaking, the original size of the unlaminated Fs. is 33 to 34 cm x 22 cm.

There are no horizontal lines to indicate upper or lower margins, but vertical lines are there both on the left and right sides, leaving 19 cm to 22 cm span for the text. Lengthwise, the written surface covers from 29 cm to 30 cm. As the reader opens the MS, the left side in front of him forms F.A. and the right side forms F.B. After this brief introduction, let me now pass on to the itemwise comparison of B1 and B2 :

Sr. No.	B1	B2
(I)	The <i>mūl mantra</i> written in Guru Arjan Dev's own hand is available in it (G & M.)	In the 5th line of <i>tatkarā rāgān kā</i> (Index of <i>rāgas</i>), it is stated that on F. 34 the following entry is available: <i>nisān(u) Guru Jī ke daskhat mahilā 6</i> , i.e., the benedictory autograph of the Sixth Guru. F. 33 B is decorated with coloured geometrical designs in honour of the <i>mūl mantra</i> which is written on a piece of paper pasted in the centre of the F. Clearly, it is to this autograph that the Index refers to. Folios numbering 31 B/32 A, 34 B/35 A and 35 B/36 A are not available. Both A and B sides of the autographed F are unnumbered,

Sr. No.

B1

B2

due probably to the cutter's machine. But the surmise that it is this decorated page that the Index refers to, as containing the Sixth Guru's, i.e., Guru Hargobind's autograph, does not seem to be wide off the mark. Guru Hargobind was the son of Guru Arjan Dev. He succeeded his father to Guruship in A.D. 1606 and remained in this office till 1644. There is another decorated F. with *mūl mantra* in the centre. The bookbinder of the Archives Department has pasted a thick paper on its back, with the result that the original back of the F. cannot be seen. This autograph faces F. 369 A. The President of the Managing Committee of Gurdwārā Bhai Banno, Mr. Surat Singh, believes that the autograph belongs to Guru Arjan Dev, but neither in the Index, nor in the text, is there any indication whatsoever that this particular autograph is that of Guru Arjan Dev. The point to be noted is that the Index of B2 commits itself unambiguously, at the very outset, that the inaugural benedictory autograph in the MS is in the hand of the Sixth Guru and not the Fifth.

Sr. No.	B1	B2
(II)	The death-dates of the first five Gurus are written in one hand. Each date, from the Sixth Guru to the Tenth, is given in a different hand (P).	<i>Jotī jot(i) samāvaney kā chālitr(u)</i> (The Chart of Death-Dates) appears on F. 32 B. The first five dates relating to the first five Gurus, are in one hand. The date of sixth Guru is by a different hand, who drew a closing line below his writing. The dates of the Seventh, Eighth and Ninth Gurus form one block and are written in a different hand. This block is separated from the next date by another dividing bar running horizontally across the page. A later hand has recorded the date of Guru Gobind Singh's death. The conclusion is clear that the first block of five dates was written by some scribe at a time when Guru Arjan Dev was no longer alive and had been succeeded by his son, Guru Hargobind. The conclusion is in line with the one arrived at (I) above.
(III)	The date recorded in the MS is <i>Assū Vadī</i> ੧ (1) <i>samvat</i> ੧੬੫੯ (1659). The date has been formed by altering the Gurmukhī digit 8 (4) into ੫ (5). The loop of Gurmukhī 8 (4) has been filled with ink and the leg of Gurmukhī ੫ (5) looks	B2 is a dated MS. The date occurs once in the third line of the <i>tatkarā rāgān kā</i> (Index of <i>Rāgas</i>), immediately below ' <i>Jotī jot(i) samāvaney kā chālitr(u)</i> ' already discussed in (II) above. Unfortunately, the date has been tampered with, but, mercifully, it is possible to identify each original digit without much difficulty. The original entry reads like this :

Sr. No.	B1	B2
	These verses are not available in other copies of B1 (K& N.)	This hymn ends at the twenty-ninth line. In the same line starts <i>audh(u) so jogī guru merā...</i> On the next F, i.e., 244 A, a new hymn starts : <i>bahu parparich kari ...</i>
(VIII)	One hymn in <i>Rāga Rāmkalī</i> has been added (B). No particulars of the hymn are given. Probably, the author is referring to Guru Arjan's own hymn in <i>Rāmkalī</i> , that is, <i>raṇa jhunjhanarā gāo sakhī, Hari eka dhiāvahu</i> of which only the first two verses are said to have been available in P1. In <i>Rāmkalī Mahilā 5</i> there are four full <i>padās</i> instead of two verses of the <i>raṇa jhunjhanarā sabad</i> (K& N.)	On F. 319 A occurs, under <i>Rāga Rāmkalī</i> , Guru Arjan's hymn beginning, <i>raṇa jhunjhanarā gāo sakhī...</i> A close look reveals that originally B2 contained only the first two verses of this hymn. The twelve following verses were added later in smaller hand. The proof lies in the normal spacing of the original lines which differs from that of the interpolated matter. While the twelve lines of the latter cover only 8½ cm, the same number of original lines on the same F. covers as much as 11¼ cm. On 318 B and F. 319 B, i.e., one F. before and one after, twelve lines cover 11 to 11½ cm.
(IX)	Mirabai's nine-line hymn, beginning <i>manu hamaro bandhio guna</i> is found in <i>Rāga Mārū</i> (G, K, N & P). ¹⁰	Mirabai's full hymn occurs on F. 369 A. It is the last hymn on the F. and covers four lines (twenty-sixth to twenty-ninth). The hand that wrote F. 367 A/B and 361 A/B, also wrote F. 369 A, indicating that the MS from which B2 was copied had Mirabai's composition at this place.

10. According to Bishan Singh Bannoānīā, Mirabai's hymn appears at the end of *Rāga Mārū* and is written in the hand in which the preceding hymns of Jaideva and Ravidas are written.

Sr. No.	B1	B2
(X)	<i>Basant kī Vār</i> by Guru Arjan Dev is placed in <i>rāga Basant</i> immediately before <i>bhagat bānī</i> and its location is correctly shown in the Index (P), which is not the case in P2, as reproduced in <i>Kartārpurī Bīr de Darshan</i> .	The <i>vār</i> in <i>Basant rāga</i> occurs immediately before the works of the <i>bhagats</i> and its F. 396 is correctly given in the Index.
(XI)	An 8-line hymn of <i>Sūrdās</i> is available in it (G, B, K, N & P ¹¹). The original MS (P1) is believed to have contained only one verse— <i>chhāḍ man(i) Hari bimukhan ko saṅg</i> .	Only one verse of <i>Sūrdās—chhāḍ man(i)...</i> is there. Some other hand has completed the hymn.
(XII)	Due to oversight of the copyists, a few hymns were got recorded at unintended places (M).	An instance of this category may be seen at F. 351 B. Guru Amar Das' <i>Solhey</i> begin at the twenty-third line. The first <i>solhā</i> , beginning with the verse <i>agam agochar veparavāhe</i> is continued to the tenth line of F. 352 A. The whole of this <i>solhā</i> is now covered with light application of sulphate of arsenic. As due to the deletion of

11. Gurbakhash Singh's informant Bhai Bishan Singh was himself one of the custodians of B1. His information is, therefore, more specific than others. His statement is that while in *rāga Sārang* the opening verse of the hymn of *Sūrdās* is in the original hand, seven verses have been added to it by a different hand.

Sr. No.	B1	B2
		<p>the first <i>solhā</i>, the second <i>solhā</i> became the first, the third became the second and so on, consequent corrections in the totalling system have been made at all the affected places. The whole of F. 358 A is also smeared with the sulphate of arsenic and among the verses rewritten on it, in a smaller handwriting, occurs also the first <i>solhā</i>, beginning with the twenty-seventh line. At its end, occur the following Gurmukhī numerals : (16.1.23), i.e., it is one complete unit of sixteen verses which is placed at the twenty-third position in serial order. It is the same place as is allotted to it in the printed copies of the Scripture, although the place that this <i>solhā</i> originally occupied in B2, tallies with that of P2 (cf. P. 33) of <i>Srī Kartārpurī Bīr de Darshan</i>). Except this major change, which seems to have been effected much later to bring into line the sequence with more well-known, probably printed versions, I was not able to discover any other major displacement of text. Omissions, of course, do exist. One, for example, may be seen at F. 445 A. The original copyist stopped after having written the fifty-ninth <i>Sahaskritī śaloka</i> of Guru Arjan Dev leaving a space of</p>

Sr. No.	B1	B2
		6¼ cm (which is normal with him) before taking up the next composition, namely, <i>Gāthā</i> of Guru Arjan Dev. Actually, there were sixty-seven <i>Sahaskritī salokas</i> by Guru Arjan Dev. Some other hand has, therefore, utilized the available space and squeezed in the remaining eight <i>salokas</i> .
(XIII)	<i>Dhunīs</i> or directions about tunes have either been squeezed later into the spaces available between the lines or written over sulphate of arsenic (<i>hartāl</i>) applied on already written material (P).	Eight <i>Vārs</i> or Odes in B2 have been provided with <i>dhunīs</i> or tunes, after which these <i>Vārs</i> are required to be sung. Out of these nine, the <i>dhunīs</i> of eight <i>Vārs</i> , namely, <i>Gaurī</i> (F. 139 B), <i>Āsā</i> (F. 188), <i>Gūjarī</i> (F. 201 B), <i>Vaḍahaṅs</i> (F. 224 A), <i>Rāmkalī</i> (F. 324 B), <i>Sārang</i> (f. 408 B), <i>Malār</i> (F. 421 A) and <i>Kānaṇā</i> (F. 431 B) have not been inserted as after-thoughts but are regular parts of the text, written by the original hands. A part of the <i>dhunī</i> of Guru Nanak Dev's <i>Vār</i> in <i>rāga Mājḥ</i> on F. 81 B, is written on the sulphate of arsenic, but even in this case, the hand seems to me to be the original one.
(XIV)	<i>Mundāvanī</i> appears as the concluding part of <i>Saloka Vārān te Vadhīk</i> and is not separately indicated in the text (P).	In a way, yes; the grand total (<i>Jumlā</i>) of <i>Saloka Vārān te Vadhīk</i> is given as 153 on F. 464 A in the twenty-eighth line. On F. 464 B, 16 cm space is left blank. Then follows <i>mundāvanī</i> of Guru Arjan Dev—

Sr. No.	B1	B2
	swollen, as if it had developed elephantiasis. The left horn of Gurmukhī digit 8 (4) has been written over. The Gurmukhī digit ੮ (8) has been turned into ੯ (9) by the addition of a hook upon it. The original date recorded in the MS, was undoubtedly <i>samvat</i> ੧੬੪੮ (1648) (P).	<i>sambat(u)</i> ੧੬੯੯ (1699) <i>mitī Assū vadī ekam pothī likh pahuchey</i> . The third digit, i.e., ੯ (9) has been written over to make it ੫ (5). The ink-smeared reed-pen seems to have gone over ੩ (t) of <i>sambat(u)</i> along with the first two digits, i.e., ੧ (1) and ੬ (6), at least once, but the forgerer's attention was focussed on converting ੯ (9) into ੫ (5). There is no evidence of 8 (4) having been converted into ੫ (5) so as to cause elephantiasis in its leg, as alleged by P. Also, there is no sign of ੮ (8) having been converted into ੯ (9) as stated by P. The original date of B2, or to be exact, of the Index of B2, turns out to be BK 1699/A.D. 1642, which tallies eminently with the <i>nisān(u)</i> of Guru Hargobind as discussed in (I) above.
(IV)	The <i>rāga</i> -Index contains the following entries with the corresponding pages given against each :	The contents of the <i>rāga</i> -Index of B2 differ in certain respects from the <i>rāga</i> -Index of B1 as given by (P). These entries occur in the following sequence :
<i>Saloka Sahaskritī</i>		F. 444 <i>Saloka Sahaskritī</i>
<i>Gāthā</i> (F)		F. 445 <i>Gāthā</i>
<i>Saloka Farīd Jī</i>		F. 446 <i>Phunahey</i>
<i>Savayyey</i> (F)		F. 446 <i>Chauboley</i>
<i>Saloka Vārān te Vadhīk</i> (P)		F. 447 <i>Saloka Kabīr Jīo</i>
		F. 451 <i>Saloka Sekh Farīda ke</i>
<i>Saloka jīt dar lakh Muhammadā</i>		F. 453 <i>Savayyey Srī Mukhbāk</i>

Sr. No.	B1	B2
	<i>Ratanmālā</i>	F. 456 <i>Savayyey Kalh ke tathā horān key</i>
	<i>Haqīqat rāh Muqām rājei</i>	F. 465 <i>Saloka tathā goṣṭa</i>
	<i>Sivanābh kī hoi, Mahilā-1</i>	<i>Malār nālī</i>
	<i>Rāgamālā (P).</i>	F. 466 <i>Ratanmālā Rāmkalī Mahilā 1</i>
		F. 466 (Sulphurated...) <i>jī Sivanābh kī</i>
		F. 466 (the last digit of the F. is illegible) <i>Rāgamālā</i>
(V)	In the <i>rāga</i> -Index, no separate heading is provided for : <i>Phunahey</i> <i>Chauboley</i> <i>Bhaṭṭān de Savayyey, bāi ātas āb (P).</i>	The <i>rāga</i> - Index of B2 does contain <i>Phunahey</i> <i>Chauboley</i> <i>Bhaṭṭān de Savayyey-saloka (i.e., Savayyey Kalh tathā hornān key),</i> and <i>Bāi ātas āb (i.e., Saloka tathā goṣṭi Malār nālī (hoi).</i>
(VI)	The liturgical portion contains only five hymns, namely : <i>so dar(u)...</i> , <i>sunā vaddā...</i> , <i>ākhā jīvā...</i> <i>Hari ke jana...</i> The other four, namely, <i>so purakh(u)...</i> , <i>too karatā...</i> , <i>jī sarvarrey...</i> and <i>bhaī parāpat</i> are absent (P).	In B1 also, the same five hymns occur in the liturgical portion and this number is indicated in the Index at F. 39 : <i>so daru pañcha sabad</i> , i.e., five hymns, beginning with <i>so dar(u)</i> .
(VII)	It contains the following verses in <i>Rāga Sorathi</i> : <i>audhu so jogī guru merā,</i> <i>is pad kā jo karai niberā</i>	It is correct that on F. 243 B, these two verses occur abruptly after Kabir's hymn in <i>rāga Sorath(i)</i> ending with..., <i>kāih Kabīr bichāri.</i> <i>bhava sāgar tari Murārī 3.8.</i>

Sr. No.	B1	B2
		<p><i>thāl vich tinn vastū paō</i>...at the end of which appears the Gurmukhī numeral ੧ (1), followed by 4½ cm of unwritten space, after which is written the <i>saloka</i> of Guru Arjan Dev—<i>Terā kītā jāto nāhī</i>...At its end the numerals are “.1.155.” Thus, after the grand total on the preceding page, two compositions of Guru Arjan Dev have been brought under the previous main heading and the grand total has been raised to 155. The inclusion of <i>Mundāvanī</i> and <i>saloka</i> in <i>Saloka Vārān te Vadhik</i> after the grand total had once been declared as 153 may be an afterthought, but it is there. No such grand totalling is indicated by Bhai Jodh Singh in P2.</p>
(XV)	<p>Three <i>salokas</i> beginning <i>jit dar lakh Muhammadā</i>.. appear at the end of the MS before <i>Rāga-mālā</i> (G, B, K, N).</p>	<p>F. 465 A begins with the superscription : <i>Saloka Mahilā ੧</i> (1)... <i>Eka Omkār satigur prasād(i)</i> in the first line. From the second line begin three <i>salokas</i> with <i>jit dar lakh Muhammadā</i> and ending with <i>ghani nipagi Nanaka chhinjh pai dravaji 3.</i> in the twelfth line.</p>
(XVI)	<p>Sixteen <i>salokas</i> beginning <i>bāi ātish</i>... are also recorded before <i>Rāgamālā</i> (G, B¹², K, N).</p>	<p>At F. 465 A the thirteenth line has the usual superscription : <i>saloka mahilā</i> (1) <i>Eka Omkār Satigur Prasād(i)</i> and the fourteenth line begins with <i>bāi ātish ab khāk</i>...</p>

12. The author refers to this composition as *vir salamāleka*. These words occur inside the text of this composition.

Sr. No.	B1	B2
		going upto the twenty-sixth line on F. 465 B, the last verse being <i>tan jhur maran sach sadā bakhsāndu</i> . These are, in all, sixteen <i>salokas</i> .
(XVII)	<i>Ratanamālā</i> too is there before <i>Rāgamālā</i> . (G, B, K). It has twenty-five <i>padas</i> (N).	F. 466 A begins with the superscription : <i>Rāga Rāmkalī Ratanmālā Mahilā १ (1)... Ek Omkār satigur prasād(i)</i> . From the second line to the twentieth line on F. 466 B, <i>Ratanmālā</i> is recorded. It begins with <i>āsanu sādhi nirālamu rahai. Pañch tatt ka nigrāhi gahai</i> and ends with <i>Nanak kahai soī bairāgi</i> . 25. The colophon in the twenty-first line says : <i>Ratanmālā sādhu utārā kitā Granth ka akharī torkī sī bhāī akharī gurmukhī likhī</i> . 1.
(XVIII)	<i>Rāh Mukām</i> story appears before <i>Rāgamālā</i> (G, B, K). It is in prose (N).	At the twenty-second line of F. 466 B we read : <i>Hakikat rāh mukām Rājā Sīvnābh kī likhanī...Ek Omkār satigur prasād(i)</i> . (<i>likhanī</i> , i.e., 'has yet to be written', is covered with sulphate of arsenic but is legible with some effort). The next line repeats the headline before proceeding with the story : <i>Hakikat rāh mukām Sīvnābh rājei kī. Nagapatan, Bidar, Tījavar...</i> The story ends at the fifth line on F. 467 A. The last words are : <i>Triā rāj hai, tahān bhi sāngati hai</i> .

Sr. No.	B1	B2
(XIX)	<i>Rāgamālā</i> is also there (G, B, K).	<i>Rāgmālā</i> begins at F. 467 B and ends at the eighteenth line on the same F.
(XX)	At the fag-end occurs the ink-formula (K, N).	On F. 467 B the ink-formula begins with the nineteenth line, immediately after <i>Rāgamālā</i> and ends at the twenty-second line.
(XXI)	The whole MS is written in many hands (G, M, P ¹³).	During my examination of B2, I could not find time to work out the number of hands employed to write it, but cursorily speaking, this number may not exceed five. It may, however, be stated that the internal physiognomy of the MS does not appear to support the story that different copyists had combined to prepare a quick copy.
(XXII)	The last pages beginning with <i>rāga Kānaṛā</i> and ending with <i>rāgamālā</i> and <i>Siāhī kī bidhī</i> are scribed in the same hand (P).	No, because on F. 442 A one hand wrote Benee's <i>pada</i> in <i>rāga Prabdhātī</i> but on F. 442 B. <i>saloka sahaskritī</i> were written by a different hand, which continued to write further on.
(XXIII)	Guru Tegh Bahadur's complete works, beginning with hymns in <i>rāga Gaurī</i> arranged in proper musical order and ending with his <i>salokas</i> , are attached at	Full Text of Guru Teg Bahadur's work is available at the end of B2. It is written on a different type of paper and in a different and much later hand, but that did not satisfy their interpolator. He has, therefore, tried to insert, wherever

13. According to Bishan Singh, the MS was scribed by twelve different hands, in addition to the couple of different hands at the end.

Sr. No.	B1	B2
	the end in a different hand. These were not distributed under appropriate <i>rāgas</i> , as there was no space available for them there (P).	he could, under appropriate <i>rāgas</i> , the Guru's hymns. He can be seen in action at Fs. 141 B, 142 A, 191 B, 210 A, 215 B (sulphurated), 226 B, 227 A, 243 A (sulphurated) and 245 A (sulphurated).
(XXIV)	It has 467 Fs. (K. N).	Yes; the number appearing on the last F. is 467 (A and B). F. 468 A is blank.

It should not take long for anyone who has followed closely the comparison given above to arrive at the conclusion that B2 is not what B1 is known to history to have been. In its own right, B2 is a valuable manuscript, even though it may have been completed in BK 1699/A.D., 1642, but the fact remains that it is not B1 and this is a fact which is highly disturbing for manuscriptologists who are not fully satisfied with anything less than the original. Already two of the four *Goindwāl MSS (pothis)*, which according to some scholars provided basic raw material for the prototype of one Sikh Scripture, are missing; the original copy of this prototype itself is believed by some to have been lost for ever to posterity; the Guru Harsahai MS, about which it was claimed once by Giani Gurdit Singh, a Granthian scholar, that it contained the original handwritings of Guru Nanak and other Gurus, was reported in the press to have been stolen from a first-class railway compartment some twenty years back, and, similarly, scores of other important MSS, listed by G.B. Singh in 1944, in his pioneering work on the old MSS of the *Granth*¹⁴, have been lost, presumably beyond any hope of recovery. And now B1 is in danger of being added to this sorry list. Mr. Harmandar Singh's rebuttal¹⁵ of Mr. Manohar Singh Marco's doubts about the authenticity of what was believed to be B1¹⁶, had raised

14. See footnote 8, abbreviation "(P)".

15. Harmandar Singh, "Bhāi Banno Jī dī Khārey vāli Bīṛ bārey asliat", *Gurmat Prakāsh*, pp. 87-96.

16. Manohar Singh Marco, "Khāri Bīṛ Bārey," *Gurmat(i) Prakāsh*, pp. 41-66.

some hope about the existence of B1 at Kanpur, but the present analysis, I am afraid, is likely to extinguish any hope that may still be lingering in any quarter. The question, however, is : when and how did the mysterious B1 disappear ? The story of a thief having taken away B1 at the dead of night, divesting it of its gilded binding and throwing the denuded MS among bushes from where it was later retrieved, forms a part of the inherited lore of Bhai Banno's descendants, though none of them knows when this desecration occurred at Khārā Māṅgaṭ. Does the story not suggest that the loss of B1 was silently made good by its custodians by filling the vacuum with B2 ? If the late Prof. Sahib Singh's opinion about the whole story woven around the book binding assignment of Bhāi Banno is accepted as being a figment of pure imagination,¹⁷ then there is the possibility of someone coming up to question the very existence of B1 for lack of conclusive documentary evidence. Alternatively, someone else may suggest that the index of B2 must have been prepared much later than the text itself, which was completed earlier. But, howsoever plausible the flight of imagination, unfortunately, it will never be possible to convert B2 into B1.

Before I close, I would like to avail this opportunity to draw the pointed attention of the learned orientalists gathered here to the multi-disciplinary importance of the Sikh Scripture. If the Sikhs fail to do their duty towards Guru Arjan Dev's monumental work, there is no reason why the wide-awake international scholarship should not take the work into its own hands. Presently, I suggest that a start be made by a joint team of Sikh scholars and scholars from Europe, the U.S.A. and other countries to locate, catalogue, photostat, and preserve the oldest MSS of the Sikh Scripture in order to make possible real textual research without any further loss of time.

Discussion

CALLEWAERT : Would the knowledge of your findings, among certain Sikh leaders outside a select audience, like the one gathered here, not antagonize further research in this field ?

17. Sahib Singh, *Ādi Bīṛ Bāre*, pp. 124-147.

- SINGH : If the premise of the learned questioner is that whenever the findings of even a bonafide researcher tend to generate an antagonistic reaction among a section of the people, the researcher must stifle or wind up his research, then, I am sorry, I cannot subscribe to his theory. You can take it for granted that any challenge to any established theory will meet with some opposition from one quarter or the other. In the present case, one person, referred to in the body of my paper, has already expressed doubts about the genuineness of what now passes as the MS of Bhāi Banno. Incidentally, these doubts were expressed in an official publication of the S.G.P.C. (Shiromaṇī Gurdwārā Prabandhak Committee). There is no denying the independent importance of the Kanpur MS because not many MSS of that date are extant, but that does not, in any way, help establish its claim to be the original Banno MS. As for the Sikhs, they are an enlightened people; they also prefer to be made wiser about things around them than to remain in ignorance.
- VAUDEVILLE : What is the relationship between those manuscripts and the copy of the *Guru Granth* which is being worshipped ? And also the one which is extolled in the Amritsar Temple could not be the same, which is also published.
- SINGH : The text of the *Granth* that is worshipped by the Sikhs as their Guru, corresponds to the oldest dated manuscript now lying at Kartarpur (District Jalandhar of Punjab), with one difference that the works of Guru Tegh Bahadur are now added to it. Many scholars believe, as does the S.G.P.C., the highest religious body of the Sikhs, that the Kartarpur MS is the original *Pothi* compiled by

Guru Arjan Dev. I have a few reservations on this point and these are based on internal evidences, for the discussion of which this is not the proper forum, but my doubts about the Kartarpur MS do not make the contents of the Granth doubtful, barring the controversy which centres around the authenticity of *Rāgamālā*, the last composition in the *Granth*. The reason why the contents do not become doubtful is that the checks and balances devised by the compiler made it extremely difficult for anyone to interpolate, without being discovered, any extraneous matter in the text proper. Each entry in the holy book is numbered and the placement is further determined by its *rāga*, authorship, metrical form, etc. The result has been that, but for the known interpolations, even the Banno versions have the same contents as the published version.

VAUDEVILLE : Are all the printed editions copies of that manuscript ?

SINGH : If not all, most of them are. Now the S.G.P.C. has taken upon itself the work of providing the correctly printed copies of the holy book, based on the earliest known dated Karatpur MS.

VAUDEVILLE : Of which origin is the manuscript in the Amritsar Temple ?

SINGH : There are printed as well as MS copies of the *Granth* in the Amritsar Temple. The manuscripts are by no means the oldest, but I am not in a position here to give you their exact dates.

*The Ahiyapur Pothī**

Ahiyapur is a village in Hoshiarpur district of the Indian Panjab. Before making Ahiyapur its sojourn, which the MS called *Ahiyapur Pothī* had to leave later, to settle down at Jalandhar, it remained for long at Goindwal, its birthplace. Goindwal is well-known to the students of Sikh religion and history as the headquarter of Guru Amar Das (1479-1574), the third Guru of the Sikhs. The MS is, therefore, also known as *Goindwāl Wālī Pothī* or *Goindwāl Pothī*. This MS has a companion volume, now in the possession of a family settled at Pinjore, a small town near Chandigarh. For the present paper, I shall confine myself to the scrutiny of *Ahiyapur MS* only.

Both the extant MSS contain some compositions of the early gurus of the Sikhs and a few medieval Bhagats (*bhaktas*). These MSS were believed to have provided the source material which Guru Arjan Dev (1563-1606), the fourth successor of Guru Nanak Dev, used in the preparation of his own comprehensive anthology comprising the complete works of his four spiritual predecessors, his own works, and the selected works of a few other well-known and not-so-well-known personalities of the religious field. Recently, this belief, pertaining to Guru Arjan Dev's stated borrowings from *Goindwāl MSS* has come under cloud. As my name occurs in the list of persons who are responsible for this development, I purpose to give, in this paper, step by step, the reasons that prompted me to become a non-believer in this theory. The fact is that before I began my work on

* Presented before American-Canadian Sikh Congregations in 10 Major Cities at the Invitation of Dr. Jasbir Singh Mān et al. Reprinted in *Panchbati Sandesh*, August, 2000, Dehradun.

Ahiyapur Pothī, I was as good or as bad a believer in the 'borrowing theory' as anyone else. But as I shall soon explain that the *Ahiyapur MS* itself seemed to me to provide sufficient internal evidence to disprove any borrowing from it by Guru Arjan Dev.

A few years back, it would not have been very difficult to dispose of the assertions of the protagonists of the 'borrowing theory' by merely pointing out that the temporal divide that parted the *Goindwāl MSS* and the first weaver of the borrowing yarn, measured more than a century and the contradictions between the statements of different writers about the number and contents of these MSS created doubts about their veracity. One additional piece of information that none of the propagators of this theory, such as Sarup Das Bhalla (*Mehmā Prakāśh* ; 1776), the author of *Gurbilās Chhevīn Pātsāhī*; 1843 ?) and Bhai Santokh Singh (*Srī Gurbartāp Sūraj Granth* ; 1843), had ever cast his eyes on the said MSS would have clinched the issue. But of late, this simple act of demolition has no longer remained that simple, as some of the most highly qualified modern scholars of the East and the West have thrown the full weight of their scholarship in favour of the 'borrowing theory'. The pick of Western scholars, interested in Sikh Studies, including, I am told, my old friend, the venerable Dr. W.H. McLeod, has rallied round Dr. Gurinder Singh Mann, the author of *The Goindwāl Pothīs : The Earliest Extant Source of The Sikh Canon* (1996). Back home, Jathedar Gurcharan Singh Tohra, the then President of the most representative elected religious body of the Sikh people, the Shiromani Gurdwara Prabandhak Committee (S.G.P.C.), Amritsar, decided to pin the faith of his Committee in the 'borrowing theory' by showering praises and bestowing robes of honour on Giani Gurdit Singh, the learned author of *Itihās Srī Gurū Granth Sāhib : Bhagat Bānī Bhāg* (1990), in which he fully upholds the earlier traditional view. It is this cartelization of eastern and western scholarship, if I may say so, in favour of the 'borrowing theory', that makes the task of its non-believers, such as myself, a bit more difficult than before. Now, the case against the traditional belief has to be proved so convincingly that no chink remains.

As I look back, it becomes clear that Professor Sahib Singh had

already thrown a spanner into the prevalent theory by persistently claiming that Guru Arjan Dev had compiled the *Ādi Granth* on the basis of an inherited corpus, containing the works of his predecessors and others. In support of his assertion, he quoted verse after verse from the works of successive Gurus to prove that such copious dictional and thematic similarities as existed in their writings, could not happen without the existence of a corpus which was transferred from the first Guru to the second and from the second to the third with his own work added, and so on. The Professor also dismissed, as pure concoction, the whole story in which Guru Arjan Dev was shown as composing and singing a eulogy in honour of Baba Mohan and receiving, as reward, the *Goindwāl MSS*, on loan. The Mohan hymn, according to the Professor's interpretation, was a paean adoring the great Lord Himself. The learned Professor's handicap was that he had no access to any of the said MSS. Most of the traditionalists, therefore, ignored his research in Panjabi language as something hardly deserving their highbrow attention. But I regard Prof. Sahib Singh's solo effort as a pioneer's brilliant step towards applying the stylistic touchstone on the sacred text.

The next challenge to the 'borrowing theory' was tried to fill the gap by exploring in detail the contents of at least one of the famed MSS, namely, the *Ahiyapur Pothī*. I am referring to my own book *Ahiyapur Wālī Pothī* (1998) published in Panjabi by Guru Nanak Dev University, Amritsar. I may say, in all humility, that my study of the contents of the *Ahiyapur Pothī* confirms, although indirectly, Prof. Sahib Singh's thesis and negates some of the major, if not all the conclusions of Dr. Mann and Giani Gurdit Singh. However, in this paper, I shall try to restrict myself only to the evidence provided by the *Ahiyapur MS* in favour of my stand that Guru Arjan Dev did not, or better still, would never have liked to consult this MS, before finalising his own anthology which was destined to become the Sikh Canon.

In a nutshell, my finding is that *Ādi Granth* and *Ahiyapur Pothī* are two parallel anthologies of *Gurbānī* and *Bhagat Bānī* with the *Ādi Granth* serving as the scripture of the Sikh mainstream and the

Ahiyapur Pothī intended to be the official sacred book of the almost still-born faction set up by Mohan and his son.

Interestingly, my very first encounter with the contents of the MS proved to be destabilising for my faith in the traditional theory. I found the hymnic portion of the text prefaced by a decorated edict, decreeing, among other things, that “anyone owing allegiance to any Guru other than the one belonging to our ancestral line, will certainly land himself in hell.” The handwriting expert, who was consulted by me, declared that the hand which had written the edict and the hand that had written the next folio, from which the hymns in the *Pothī* started, was the same, though there might have been some time-lag between the two. For me, the conclusion was inevitable that the MS was the relic of a frustrated claimant for the exalted seat of Guruship of the Sikh community. The date given on the edict (Samvat 1652/A.D. 1595) was clearly a later interpolation. Therefore, it had to be ignored. As blessings of the first three Gurus were made available in the edict for the MS, the claimant, clearly, belonged to the period posterior to the third Guru. The third Guru, as we know it, had bypassed both his sons Mohan and Mohri, and appointed his son-in-law Bhai Jetha as his spiritual successor, under the new name of Ram Das. Evidently, the newly-nominated fourth Guru’s ancestral line was not the same as that of his father-in-law, but the claim of ancestry by the sons of the third Guru could not be challenged. Fortunately, the Sikh Canon itself provides evidence that the younger son, Mohri, accepted the validity of Guru Ram Das as the spiritual successor of his (i.e., Mohri’s) father, Guru Amar Das and enrolled himself as one of his loyal followers (cf. *Srī Gurū Granth Sāhib*, page 924). According to the traditional version of the story, Mohan was completely unmindful of the goings-on around him, being deeply immersed in the remembrance of God’s Name. But Bhai Gurdas, who was Mohan’s contemporary and was a confidant of the fifth Guru, the compiler of the *Ādi Granth*, has a different story to tell. According to him Mohan, when he found to his dismay that his claim to the next Guruship had been overruled by his father, became mentally deranged (cf. 26th *Vār*, 33rd *Paurī*), meaning

thereby that he had lost all sense of shame, propriety, and decorum. In the given context, it seemed quite natural for me to conclude that the *Ahiyapur MS* was made to serve the role of a totem for the newly-conceived ancestral Guruship for Mohan and his progeny. It was used as proof, as also a justification for a parallel Guruship that rejected the Guruship of Guru Ram Das and invested Mohan, the lineal descendant of the third Guru, with the normal legal right of succession. This is how the edict unmasked for me the schismatic designs of Mohan and his family. If Bhai Gurdas knew what Mohan was up to, Guru Arjan Dev would also have known the mischievous intentions of the Mohan clan. Under these circumstances, it would have been absolutely unusual for Guru Arjan Dev to go abegging for the *Pothī* or *Pothīs* from the head of a schism, who regarded his father (Guru Ram Das) and consequently him also, as usurpers of his rights.

One may concede, though very reluctantly, the distant possibility of Guru Arjan beseeching the rival camp for the loan of the MS/MSS, if it is presumed that Guru Arjan Dev had with him no record of the works, particularly of the first three Gurus, with the result that, as compared to the Guru himself, Baba Mohan would have proved certainly to be a religious heavy-weight. Supposing that were the actual position at that time, which nincompoop from the rival faction would have liked to strengthen the shaky position of Guru Arjan Dev by providing him with the very treasure, which he, a usurper in their eyes, lacked so badly? Fortunately, my comparative examination of the *Ahiyapur Pothī* with *Ādi Granth* makes it clear beyond any doubt that such a supposition would be entirely misplaced.

Before I take up this aspect of the MS, I would like to draw the attention of my learned friends here to another schismatic fact that came to my notice as soon as I turned the folio of the edict to reach the hymn of Guru Nanak in the musical measure *Sūhbī* or *Sūhī*. The invocational canopy, namely the *Mūl Mantra*, under which the first hymn was placed, differed substantially from the one which appears at the top of the first composition in the *Ādi Granth*. The *Mūl Mantra* of the *Pothī* reads as under :

ੴ ਸਤਿ ਗੁਰੂ ਪਰਸਾਦੁ (ਪਰਸਾਦੁ) ਸਚੁ ਨਮੁ (ਨਾਮੁ)
 ਕਰਤਰ (ਕਰਤਾਰੁ) ਨਿਰਭਉ ਨਿਰੀਕਾਰੁ ਅਕਲ (ਅਕਾਲ)
 ਮੂਰਤਿ ਅਜੂਨੀ ਸਾਭਓ (ਸੰਭਉ)

While the same formula as found in *Ādi Granth* runs as under :

ੴ ਸਤਿਨਾਮੁ ਕਰਤਾ ਪੁਰਖੁ ਨਿਰਭਉ ਨਿਰਵੈਰੁ
 ਅਕਾਲ ਮੂਰਤਿ ਅਜੂਨੀ ਸੈਭੰ ਗੁਰ ਪ੍ਰਸਾਦਿ

When Miṇa faction, headed by Guru Arjan Dev's elder brother, Pirthi Chand, appeared on the scene, it also went the Mohan way. It adopted the *Mohan faction's* version of the *Mūl Mantra*. The difference in the wording of the basic credal assertion also made me pause and think whether Guru Arjan would deign to bend his knees before Mohan or, for that matter, before Pirthi Chand, whose schismatic designs included non-adherence to Guru Arjan's credal formula ? But soon, as I went deeper and farther into the text, comparing each verse with its Granthian counterpart, the questionings in my mind were replaced by a conviction that the two anthologies owed their existence to two different sources. They were parallel products and the *Ādi Granth* owed nothing to the *Ahiyapur Pothī*.

Now let me prove my claim by comparing the contents of only the opening *Rāga* namely *Sūbbī* [*Sūhī*] of the *Pothī* with their counterparts in the *Ādi Granth*. To be fair, I have restricted my comparative study to the hymns of the first three Gurus, as the compiler of the *Pothī* had obviously no intention to go beyond that limit. Of course, the *bhagats* available in this *Rāga* have been covered in the following analysis. The learned readers will excuse me if I make it doubly clear that the analysis of *Rāga Sūhī* is in the nature of a sample only. Other *Rāgas* also abound in the types of examples quoted from the first *Rāga* of the *Pothī*.

A total of 48 hymns are recorded in the *Pothī* under this *Rāga*, though the actual total comes to 47, as one of the hymns of Farid was unwittingly written by the scribe twice (ਤਪਿ ਤਪਿ ਲੂਈ ਹਥ ਮਰੋੜੇ; ਫੋਲੀਓ 58ਅ/ਤਪਿ ਤਪਿ ਲੁਹਿ ਲੁਹਿ ਹਉ ਹਾਥ ਮਰੋਰਉ...ਫੋਲੀਓ 60ਉ). The earlier version stands cancelled in the *Pothī*, but the count of the total was allowed to remain untouched. As compared to these 47 hymns, the *Ādi Granth* has a total of 44 hymns (not counting the *Vār of the 3rd*

Guru and all the hymns of the 4th and the 5th Gurus). Starting with this difference in the number of hymns preserved in the two compilations, the divergences of various types begin to surface. See these example.

- (i) The authorship of one hymn (ਜਿਨ ਕਉ ਭਾਡੈ ਭਾਉ ਤਿਨਾ ਸਵਾਰਸੀ...ਫੋਲੀਓ 10ੳ) is attributed by the *Pothi* to the second Guru. The *Ādi Granth* ascribes it to the first Guru.
- (ii) Similarly, as many as seven hymns, ascribed to Guru Amar Das in the *Pothi*, are included among Guru Nanak's compositions in the *Ādi Granth*. (These hymns are : ਜਪ ਤਪ ਕਾ ਬੰਧੁ ਬੇੜੁਲਾ ਜਿਤੁ ਲੰਘਹਿ ਵਹੇਲਾ... (ਫੋਲੀਓ 9 ੳ); ਭਾਂਡਾ ਹਛਾ ਸੋਇ ਜੋ ਤਿਸੁ ਭਾਵਸੀ... (ਫੋਲੀਓ 10 ਅ); ਜਿਨਿ ਕੀਆ ਤਿਨਿ ਦੇਖਿਆ ਜਗੁ ਧੰਧੜੈ ਲਾਇਆ... (ਫੋਲੀਓ 32 ਅ); ਮੇਰਾ ਮਨੁ ਰਾਤਾ ਗੁਣ ਰਵੈ ਮਨਿ ਭਾਵੈ ਸੋਈ... (ਫੋਲੀਓ 34 ੳ); ਮਨਹੁ ਨ ਨਾਮੁ ਵਿਸਾਰਿ ਅਹਿਨਿਸ ਧਿਆਈਐ... (ਫੋਲੀਓ 44ੳ); ਮਾਣਸ ਜਨਮੁ ਦੁਲੰਭੁ ਗੁਰਮੁਖਿ ਪਾਇਆ... (ਫੋਲੀਓ 51 ਅ) ਤੇ... ਜਿਉ ਆਰਣਿ ਲੋਹਾ ਪਾਇ ਭੰਨਿ ਘੜਾਈਐ... (ਫੋਲੀਓ 52 ਅ)
- (iii) One of Guru Amar Das's hymns available in the *Pothi* (ਕਰਿ ਲਾਲਚ ਮਨੁ ਲੋਭਾਣਾ ਕਿਉ ਕਰਿ ਛੁਟੀਐ ਜੀ... (ਫੋਲੀਓ 30ਅ) is absent from the *Ādi Granth*.
- (iv) One hymn of Guru Nanak given in the *Ādi Granth* (ਜੋ ਦੀਸੈ ਗੁਰਸਿਖੜਾ ਤਿਸੁ ਨਿਵਿ ਨਿਵਿ ਲਾਗਉ ਪਾਇ ਜੀਉ... (ਪੰਨਾ 763) does not occur in the *Pothi*.
- (v) Similarly, two hymns of Kabir (ਜੈਸੇ ਰੰਗੁ ਸੁਪਨੈ ਨਿਧਿ ਪਾਈ ਮਨ ਹੀ ਮਨੁ ਸਮਾਨਾ...ਫੋਲੀਓ 55ਅ ਤੇ... ਕੁਸਲੁ ਕੁਸਲੁ ਕਰਿ ਸਭ ਜਗੁ ਬਿਨਸਿਆ ਪੜਿਓ ਕਾਲ ਕੀ ਫਾਸੀ... ਫੋਲੀਓ 60ਅ) and one of Nāmdēv (ਮਾਤ ਕਹੈ ਮੇਰੇ ਪੁਤਰਾ ਘਰਿ ਅੰਨਿ ਕਿਓ ਸਰਸੀ...ਫੋਲੀਓ 61 ੳ) are recorded in the *Pothi* but are not included in the *Ādi Granth*.
- (vi) All the three hymns authored by 'Gulam' (ਪਿਰ ਕੈ ਰੰਗਿ ਰਤੀ ਸੋਹਾਗਣਿ ਅਨਦਿਨੁ ਰਲੀਆ ਮਾਣੈ...ਫੋਲੀਓ 53 ਅ; ਮੈ ਅਵਗਣਿਆਰੀ ਕੋ ਗੁਣੁ ਨਾਹੀ...ਫੋਲੀਓ 54 ੳ ਤੇ... ਪਕੇ ਮੰਡਪ ਮਹਲ ਹਜਾਰਾ...ਫੋਲੀਓ 55 ੳ) and one each by Sada Sewak (ਪਿਰ ਕੈ ਸੰਗਿ ਰਤੀ ਸੋਹਾਗਣਿ ਅਨੁਦਿਨੁ ਰਲੀਆ ਮਾਣੈ...ਫੋਲੀਓ 54 ਅ) and Saraf (ਜਿਸ ਕਾਰਣਿ ਤਨੁ ਮਨੁ ਜਾਲਿਆ...ਫੋਲੀਓ 6 ਅ) are not available in the *Ādi Granth*.
- (vii) Two of Kabir's hymns (ਥਾਕੇ ਨੈਨ ਸ੍ਵਨ ਸੁਨਿ ਥਾਕੇ ਥਾਕੀ ਸੁੰਦਰਿ

ਕਾਇਆ, ਤੇ... ਏਕੁ ਕੋਟੁ ਪੰਚ ਸਿਕਦਾਰਾ ਪੰਚੇ ਮਾਗਹਿ ਹਾਲਾ...ਪੰਨਾ 793)
which the *Pothī* records under *Rāga Sūhī*, are given under
Rāga Parbhātī in the *Ādi Granth*.

I have not touched many other differences such as those in vocabulary and arrangements of lines, etc., though in certain cases these have grown into major differences. Let me give just one example. In the *pothī*, there are two independent hymns under *Rāga Bhaironī*, beginning with the opening lines (ਹਿਦੂ ਗਰਦਨਿ ਮਾਰਉ ਤੋਹਿ... (ਫੋਲੀਓ 265 ਅ); ਸੁਲਤਾਨੁ ਪੂਛੈ ਕਹੁ ਰੇ ਨਾਮਾ ਤੇਰਾ ਸੁਆਮੀ ਕੈਸਾ ਹੈ... (ਫੋਲੀਓ 266 ਅ) but these two are found merged into one hymn in the *Ādi Granth* (ਸੁਲਤਾਨ ਪੂਛੈ ਸੁਨੁ ਬੇ ਨਾਮਾ... (ਪੰਨਾ 1165).

How could such vital and wide differences between the two anthologies occur unless it is presumed that Guru Arjan Dev had before him a corpus different from the *Pothī*? Add all these textual differences to the dictional and other similarities between the works of the successive Gurus, as adduced by Prof. Sahib Singh, and we have almost a foolproof case that Guru Arjan Dev had nothing to do with the *Ahiyapur Pothī* that belonged to a rival schism which tried to place its own *Kachī Bāṇī* at par with *Gurbāṇī*.

The *Pothī* has preserved as many as 13 hymns carrying the pseudonym of 'Nanik'. These hymns are not the compositions of Guru Nanak. Nor are these the hymns of Guru Ram Das composed before he ascended the throne of Guruship, as wrongly believed by some scholars. These are exactly the type of writings which Guru Amar Das had branded as 'fake' or *Kachī Bāṇī* and warned his Sikhs against having any concern with them. Guru Arjan Dev could never be expected to have any truck with such people and their literature, whatever the circumstances, especially when he was fully equipped with the required material.

A host of questions may still be raised by competent scholars, relating to the compilation of the *Ādi Granth*, but all these, I hope, will remain irrelevant for the subject of this paper, namely, the non-contribution of anything by *Ahiyapur MS* towards the compilation of Guru Arjan Dev's magnum opus, the *Ādi Granth*.

In the end, I would like to pose a question to my friends on the other side of the fence : Suppose the *Ahiyapur Pothī* is senior to

the *Ādi Granth* in age and also that it was with Guru Arjan Dev before he began compiling the *Ādi Granth*, then the question that should nag my friends again and again, would be : what on earth could have made Guru Arjan Dev change the authorship of the hymns, preserved in the older MSS of the *Pothi* as the works of the second and the third Gurus, to that of the first Guru ? What will make him close his eyes towards otherwise quite passable hymns ascribed by the *Pothi* to Guru Nanak, Guru Amar Das, Bhagat Kabīr and Bhagat Nāmdev, while some other hymns by these very persons were accepted for inclusion ? Does the elaborate system followed by the Guru in the compilation of the *Ādi Granth* suggest that the Guru or his amanuensis, Bhai Gurdas, could make drastic changes in the authorship of hymns, or reject others, just for the fun of it ? Does the *Ādi Granth*, a huge work accomplished by the Guru and his assistants, really betray any signs about the whimsical, wayward or temperamentally unstable nature of the team which would accept or reject the authorship of their literary heritage without any rhyme or reason ? The reply to all such questions is a definitive NO. The utmost veneration and care with which the Guru approached the Granthian project and, later, the final MSS of the *Ādi Granth* itself, is proof enough that he could not have played frivolously with any such matter, much less the authorship of hymns. His own compositions, as well as those of the preceding Gurus, provide ample evidence that they treated Gurbani as the sacred word revealed to them by the Divine Dispenser. The only satisfactory answer for wide and large divergences between the contents of the two anthologies lies, in my humble opinion, in accepting gracefully the Theory of Parallel Entities and rejecting straightaway the Borrowing Theory.

Transliteration of the *Gurū Granth Sāhib* into Devanāgarī Script*

Normally, transliteration is a much less exacting exercise than translation. In fact, once the principles of transliteration are settled, the work may even tend to become merely mechanical. Where the original text happens to be sacred and of the size and linguistic variety of the *Gurū Granth Sāhib*, it is natural to expect that the preliminaries will claim as much care and attention as would obviate any possibility of error. But, a survey of the transliterations of the *Gurū Granth Sāhib* into Devanāgarī script belies any such expectation and provides extremely sad examples of slovenly work. I have had occasion to examine a number of Devanāgarī transliterations of the sacred text, such as, for instance, the editions brought out by Bhai Mohan Singh Vaid (1927), the Sarv Hind Sikh Mission, Amritsar (1937), Shiromaṇī Gurdwārā Prabandhak Committee (1951), Swami Arjan Singh Muni (incomplete, with commentary, 1960), Qaumi Press (incomplete, with commentary, 1965), Messrs Jawahar Singh Kirpal Singh (undated) and Messrs Chattar Singh Jiwan Singh (undated). Most of them follow the rather simplistic rule of replacing Gurmukhī orthographic symbols with their Devanāgarī counterparts. Although genetically belonging to the same Brahmi stock, Gurmukhī and Devanāgarī have their distinct alphabetic and orthographic systems. Bhai Mohan Singh Vaid was conscious of some of the characteristics that differentiate the two systems and was, most probably, not ignorant of the pronunciatinal mess that the wholesale imposition of Gurmukhī characteristics on Devanāgarī script could cause, but

* First Published in *Journal of Sikh Studies*, February, 1977, Amritsar, Guru Nanak Dev University, Vol. IV, No. 1.

surprisingly enough, he opted for an almost mechanical change of script, with first allegiance to Gurmukhī, totally unmindful of its effect on the readers of Devanāgarī transliteration. A quotation from the *Jap(u)* will make the point clear : *ta haumai kahai na koi* (ਤ ਰਉਮੈ ਕਹੈ ਨ ਕੋਇ; p. 1) has been transliterated there as त हउमै कहै न कोइ. Even those who have only working knowledge of the alphabets of Gurmukhī and Devanāgarī scripts know that whereas Gurmukhī needs the addition of medial vowel-symbols () () respectively, to make its 'ੳ' and 'ੲ' express phonetic values of 'u' and 'i' vowels, the उ and इ of Devanāgarī do not require any additional adjuncts to express the same sounds. Thus उ and इ in Devanāgarī represent the same sound as ੳ and ੲ in Gurmukhī. In Devanāgarī the addition () i.e. 'u' to उ (उ) and 'i' to इ (इ) so changes their phonetic values qualitatively as to make them represent long 'oo' (=ऊ) and 'ee' (=ई) vowels respectively. Bhai Mohan Singh's attempt to take 'u' and 'i' of Gurmukhī from ੳ and ੲ and graft them on to Devanāgarī 'm' and 'b' is an atrocious innovation. That is probably the reason why no other transliterator has accepted the system evolved by him. Others render the same text as : त हउमै कहै न कोइ।

The Sarv Hind Sikh Mission, in the Introduction of its Devanāgarī version, claimed to make an important departure in the concept of transliteration of the *Granth* into Devanāgarī. Rather than adhering religiously to Gurmukhī orthography, it sought to make the standard pronunciation of the text as its base. For instance, while Vaid transliterated '*chupai chup na hovaī*' (ਚੁਪੈ ਚੁਪ ਨ ਹੋਵਈ) as चुपै चुपि न होवई and the S.G.P.C., Qaumi Press and Jawahar Singh Kirpal Singh versions rendered the text as, चुपै चुपि न होवई, the Sarv Hind Sikh Mission rendered it as चुपै चुप्प न होवई. If transliteration is not to become mere transliteration, it cannot run away from the duty of transmitting to its readers the standard pronunciation of the original text through the new alphabet.

In the opinion of the present writer, the innovation introduced by the Sarv Hind Sikh Mission was an advancement over other editions, but the Mission does not appear to have carried its reform to a logical end. To quote one instance, it transliterated : *bhukhiā*

bhukh na utarī (ਭੁਖਿਅਾ ਭੁਖ ਨ ਉਤਰੀ) as ਖੁਖਿਅਾ ਖੁਖ ਨ ਤਤਰੀ, which rendering was adopted by Swami Arjan Muni in his text-cum-commentary, while S.G.P.C., Qaumi Press and Jawahar Singh Kirpal Singh editions remained content with ਖੁਖਿਅਾ ਖੁਖ ਨ ਤਤਰੀ. Now, if the Sikh Mission had chosen to geminate ਟ in ਉਤਰੀ, by transliterating it as ਤਤਰੀ, in order to make the writing correspond to the standard pronunciation, then 'ਖ' occurring in ਭੁਖਿਅਾ and ਭੁਖ had also to be geminated and written as : ਖੁਖਿਖਅਾ ਖੁਖਖ or to be still more exact as ਖੁਖਿਖਅਾਂ ਖੁਖਖ. Similarly, the word *sach(u)* (ਸਚੁ) which occurs four times in the text, *ād(i) sach(u) jugāḍ(i) sach(u) hai bhī sach(u) Nanak hoṣī bhī sach(u)* (ਆਦਿ ਸਚੁ ਜੁਗਾਦਿ ਸਚ ਹੈ ਭੀ ਸਚੁ ਨਾਨਕ ਹੋਸੀ ਭੀ ਸਚੁ), has been transliterated, at all the four places, as 'ਸਚੁ', although according to the principle enunciated by the Sikh Mission, its correct transliteration should have been 'ਸਚ੍ਚੁ'. Evidently, the Mission's work leaves much to be desired. Indeed, the Mission was conscious of some of its shortcomings, for example, its inability to indicate nasalization, which though pronounced by indigenous readers, is not physically indicated in the sacred text. Of some of its other shortcomings, the Mission was not even conscious.

As two important institutions, namely Punjabi University, Patiala, and S.G.P.C. are planning to bring out new Devanāgarī editions of the *Gurū Granth Sāhib*, it is but proper that their timely attention be drawn to the task that lies ahead of them. The need becomes all the more pressing because the two august bodies are reported to be intent on foisting the orthography of the sacred text on their Devanāgarī versions, unmindful of the distortions that a mechanical change in the script causes in the pronunciation of those for whom Devanāgarī editions are undertaken. The pitfalls are likely to be avoided if before undertaking the project of transliteration, the transliterators clearly spell out their objectives, as also the system to be adopted for its achievements. Bhai Kahn Singh, the compiler of the *Encyclopaedia of Sikh Literature* was one such person who was clear in his mind about what he was after. He made a passing reference to Devanāgarization of the *Gurū Granth* in his *Gurmat(i) Mārtand* (completed in 1938; published in 1962 by the S.G.P.C.

Amritsar) and prescribed a cardinal principle for all future transliterations in the following words :

“ਗੁਰਬਾਣੀ ਦੀ ਨਾਗਰੀ, ਉਰਦੂ ਆਦਿਕ ਵਿਚ ਨਕਲ ਕਰਨ ਵੇਲੇ ਇਸ ਬਾਤ ਦਾ ਖਾਸ ਧਿਆਨ ਰੱਖਣਾ ਚਾਹੀਏ ਕਿ ਗੁਰਬਾਣੀ ਦੇ ਸ਼ਬਦ ਜ਼ਰਾ ਵੀ ਨਾ ਬਦਲੇ ਜਾਣ, ਉਚਾਰਣ ਉਹੀ ਰਹੇ, ਪਰ ਅੱਖਰਾਂ ਦੇ ਜੋੜ (ਹਿਜੇ-spellings) ਉਸ ਭਾਸ਼ਾ ਅਨੁਸਾਰ ਹੋਣ, ਜਿਸ ਦੇ ਅੱਖਰਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਬਾਣੀ ਲਿਖੀ ਗਈ ਹੈ, ਜਿਵੇਂ :

ਗਿਆਨ ਦੀ ਥਾਂ	ਜ਼ਾਨ
ਖਟ ਦੀ ਥਾਂ	ਥਟ
ਕਰਮ ਦੀ ਥਾਂ	ਕਰਮ
ਦਰਸਨ ਦੀ ਥਾਂ	ਦਰਸ਼ਨ
ਰਿਣ ਦੀ ਥਾਂ	ਠਹਾ
ਰਿਖੀ ਦੀ ਥਾਂ	ਠ੍ਰਿਖਿ, ਆਦਿ

ਜੇ ਇਸ ਨਿਯਮ ਅਨੁਸਾਰ ਨਕਲ ਨਹੀਂ ਹੋਵੇਗੀ ਤਾਂ ਪਾਠਕਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਗੁਰਬਾਣੀ ਦਾ ਅਰਥ ਵਿਚਾਰ ਕੁਝ ਪ੍ਰਾਪਤ ਨਹੀਂ ਹੋਵੇਗਾ ਅਰ ਨਾ ਪਾਠ ਕਰਨ ਲਈ ਰੁਚੀ ਪੈਦਾ ਹੋਵੇਗੀ।

In order to illustrate the operation of his system, he transliterated a verse from *Sukhmanī* of Guru Arjan Dev thus :

ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਗਿਆਨੀ ਸਦਾ ਸਮਦਰਸੀ ॥ ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਗਿਆਨੀ ਕੀ ਦ੍ਰਿਸਟਿ ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤ ਬਰਸੀ ॥
 ब्रह्मज्ञानी सदा समदर्शी ॥ ब्रह्मज्ञानी की दृष्टि अमृत बरसी ॥

Bhai Kahn Singh was undoubtedly one of those few scholars whose mastery of Sanskrit-Hindi-Devanāgarī equalled his proficiency in Punjabi-Gurmukhī and although he did not bring out any Devanāgarī edition of the *Gurū Granth*, nor was his system adopted by any subsequent transliterator or publisher, yet the eminent practicability and utility of his system should be quite clear. But, there lurks an inherent self-contradiction between the theory and its practical demonstration. In principle, he does not tolerate even the slightest deviation from the text, the declared intention being the preservation of the original pronunciation, but he also recommends the wholesale adoption of spellings current in the guest script. This latter exercise, we are afraid, will convert most of the *tadbhava* vocables to their *tatsama* states, thereby disturbing the whole linguistic atmosphere of the sacred book. An illustration given by Bhai Kahn Singh carries within it the evidence of the Indian classical scholar's inevitable tendency towards Sanskritization of Prākṛitic elements in medieval texts. *Darsan* (ਦਰਸਨ) has been transliterated

as *darshan* (दर्शन), ostensibly to facilitate its understandability by the Devanāgarī readers, but without any indication or warning to the readers, that a purist has been at large, transfiguring the original स 's' into 'श' 'sh' ! However, the Bhai transliterates as समदर्सी and not as समदर्शी although the latter form would have fitted his scheme much better. Left to ourselves, we would prefer to write दर्सन in our transliteration because it preserves 'न' sound of the original, simultaneously utilizing the non-Gurmukhī Devanāgarī device of representing the syncopated vowel 'a' by carrying 'r' at the top of the *shirorekha*, its clear pronunciation being *darsan* and not *darasan*.

In the light of all that has been said about the principles adopted by various transliterators, our expectations from a Devanāgarī transliteration of *Gurū Granth Sāhib* will be :

- (i) to preserve, as far as possible, the orthographic characteristics of the original because of the fact that some characteristics, as for instance, the use of 'i' (ऋ) and (ॠ) short vowels, with the terminal consonants of vocables are meaningful inflectional or orthographic vestiges of Middle Indo-Aryan Languages (though not made much use of now for pronunciational purposes) and are likely to prove helpful to students of comparative philology and linguistics;
- (ii) to make it represent, at the same time, the correct and standard pronunciation as current among accepted scholars of the sacred text; and
- (iii) as far as possible, to accept the normal orthographic behaviour of Devanāgarī script without any modification.

On the face of it, these conditions seem to be self-contradictory. The retention of all the medieval characteristics of Gurmukhī orthography in Devanāgarī cannot but come into clash with the present day orthographic system of Devanāgarī. The adherence to pronunciation may also prove sufficiently ticklish in that it may raise controversies at home. For example, in the *Gurū Granth Sāhib*, nasalization has to be introduced at many places by the readers themselves. There are sticklers who like to pronounce the written word literally even when it goes counter to the spoken idiom

or gives unintended meanings. The straight fact is that in the matter of standardization of the pronunciation of their sacred text, Sikhs have to cover much ground, but such difficulties and many more, also, need not make us throw up our hands in despair. Modern advances in printing technology offer many alternatives with the help of which we can certainly make Gurmukhī characteristics co-exist with modern Devanāgarī. We have tried to experiment with one possibility in the specimen of transliteration appended at the end of this article. The difficulty relating to correct pronunciation is in the nature of an opportunity and a challenge, rather than a deterrent. There is, therefore, no reason to run away from the difficulties posed by the problem of transliteration.

It may be relevant here to enumerate a few of the characteristics of the original orthography of *Gurū Granth Sāhib* so that a clear picture of the difficulties posed by the text is there before its transliterators :

- (i) The text does not use any distinctive orthographic symbol to indicate the gemination of a consonantal sound. Experienced readers, however, do not commit many mistakes and usually pronounce correctly the gemination, where required. Blind orthographic transliteration of the text, therefore, cannot be a proper guide to the pronunciation prevalent among knowledgeable persons.
- (ii) Some, not all, consonantal clusters are represented through conjunct characters. Some examples of the conjuncts used in the text, mostly in the compositions captioned *salok sahaskriti* and *sawayyās* of the Bhaṭṭs, are :

ਸ੍ਰ (Sya), ਸ਼ (sha), ਸ਼੍ਰ (scha), ਸ੍ਰ (sta), ਸ਼੍ਰ (sta),
 ਸਥਾ (stha), ਸ੍ਤਿ (Sti), ਸ੍ਰੀ (Sree), ਸ੍ਨਾ (sna), ਸ੍ਰ (sya),
 ਸ੍ਰਾ (sra), ਸ੍ਵ (sva), ਹ੍ਰਾ (hra), ਕ੍ਰ (k ha), ਕ੍ਰਾ (kya),
 ਕ੍ਰਾ (kyā), ਕ੍ਰਾ (kra), ਕ੍ਰਿ (kri), ਕ੍ਰੋ (kro), ਕ੍ਰੂ (kroo),
 ਕ੍ਰੁ (khyā), ਤ੍ਰੀ (tree), ਗ੍ਰ (g ha), ਗ੍ਰਾ (gra), ਗ੍ਰਾ (Gyā),
 ਗ੍ਰਾ (gyau), ਗ੍ਰਾ (Gra), ਗ੍ਰਿ (gti), ਗ੍ਰਾ (ghra), ਜ੍ਰੋ (jyo),
 ਢ੍ਰ (d ha), ਢ੍ਰਾ (dya), ਢ੍ਰਿਉ (Dyiau), ਤ੍ਰ (t ha), ਤ੍ਰਾ (tya),
 ਤ੍ਰਾ (tra), ਤ੍ਰਾ (traa), ਤ੍ਰਿ (tri), ਤ੍ਰੇ (tre), ਥ੍ਰਾ (thya),

ਥ੍ਰ (thra), ਦ੍ਰ (dra), ਦ੍ਰੁ (dru), ਦ੍ਰੁ (d ha), ਦ੍ਰ (dga),
 ਦ੍ਰੁ (dya), ਦ੍ਰਿ (dri), ਦ੍ਰੁ (dwa), ਦ੍ਰਾ (dra), ਧ੍ਰਾ (dhya),
 ਧ੍ਰੁ (dhra), ਧ੍ਰੁ (dhru), ਧ੍ਰੁ (dhroo), ਧ੍ਰੁ (dhram), ਨ੍ਰੁ (nha),
 ਨ੍ਰੁ (nya), ਨ੍ਰਿ (nyi), ਨ੍ਰੁ (nra), ਪ੍ਰੁ (p ha), ਪ੍ਰੁ (pta),
 ਪ੍ਰੁ (pra), ਪ੍ਰਾ (praa), ਪ੍ਰਿ (pri), ਪ੍ਰੀ (pree), ਪ੍ਰੈ (prey),
 ਪ੍ਰੁ (pya), ਪ੍ਰੁਇ (pyau), ਬ੍ਰੁ (bya), ਬ੍ਰੁ (bra), ਬ੍ਰੁ (bhya),
 ਬ੍ਰੁ (Bhrum), ਬ੍ਰੁ (Bhra), ਮ੍ਰੁ (mya), ਮ੍ਰੁ (mha), ਮ੍ਰਿ (mri),
 ਰ੍ਰੁ (rha), ਰ੍ਰੁ (rya), ਰ੍ਰਿਉ (ryiau), ਲ੍ਰੁ (lya), ਲ੍ਰਿ (lyai)

but at most of the places, the use of conjuncts have been avoided and the absence of 'schwa' is left to be detected by the reader himself. Experienced persons make no mistakes in recitation and ਮਸਤ (ਮਸਤ / masat), is invariably pronounced as ਮਸਤ (ਮਸਤ / mast), although an uninitiated or untrained person will surely read it as *m-a-s-a-t* or *m-a-s-a-t-a*. Thus, in this case also, no indiscriminate transliteration can do justice to the sacred text.

- (iii) The symbol for nasalization has been mostly left unrecorded. The more enlightened readers introduce on their own the required nasal element in view of the requirements of grammar, speech-idiom, etc.
- (iv) The text gives recognition to only one sibilant, namely, ਸ (ਸ, s) and dispenses with the sounds represented by श or ष of Devanāgarī. The same sibilant stands for से, सी and सुभाद of Arabic alphabet.
- (v) The abbreviated symbols for ਉ (u) and ਏ (i) (i.e. ' _ ' ' f ') retain their functional character fully only when used initially, but are selectively functional when used medially and terminally, where they help understand the meanings better.

These are some of the salient points that have to be kept in mind, if humanly possible, by any conscientious transliterator of the sacred text into Devanāgarī or for that matter into any other script. I append a specimen of the transliteration of the first five stanzas of the *Jap(u)*, the opening text of the *Gurū Granth Sāhib*. This, it

is hoped, will provide scholars of the two august bodies—S.G.P.C. and Punjabi University, Patiala, as also others interested in the project, with a starting point. For the Gurmukhī text, we have followed the *Ādi Śrī Gurū Granth Sāhib* published by S.G.P.C., Amritsar in 1977.

According to this system, the text has been printed in three colours—black, blue and red. The black and blue colours, represent the original text, faithfully reproduced in the Devanāgarī orthography. Further, blue colour represents the terminal vowel attachments of the original text which remain almost always unpronounced. The red colour indicates the additions that have been made by me, for one reason or the other, but mostly in order to bring the written word closer to its standard spoken form. Through the use of colours, it has been tried to fulfil the conditions already set out above for an ideal transliteration. Better alternatives to this multicoloured method may certainly be thought of. For example, different founts of the same type may be prepared for different features that are intended to be pointed out. That may enable us to dispense with the need of using different colours and may also cut the cost by at least half, if not more.

I am conscious of the fact that the transliteration of the whole text may confront us with many other problems as have not been covered in the appended specimen. For instance, Devanāgarites may pronounce लिखिआ, कहिआ, भाखिआ or थापिआ nearer to the intended pronunciation if these were spelled as लिख्या, कहया, भाख्या, थाप्या but in view of the availability of granthian spellings in some of the medieval Devanāgarī literature, we have preferred to keep the original 'इआ' rather than 'या' ending. Problems, I believe, are never beyond human ingenuity to tackle. With regard to the present specimen, my only claim is that my method bridges the gulf that exists between the literal and the oral and carries both the traditions as honestly as possible to the Devanāgarī clientele.

One truism must not be lost sight of. The exact transmission of all the sounds of a language is almost impossible whether through its own or through any other alphabet. For perfection in this respect, one has either to seek the help of quality tapes and records or the

International Phonetic Script, failing which one has to bear with the limitations imposed upon languages by their scripts. For the Devanāgarī transliteration of his concept, the present writer does not aim at the type of perfection achievable through tapes, records or the formidable IPS. The writer proceeds by accepting the limitations and characteristics of the Gurmukhī as well as the Devanāgarī script and seeks to convey, as far as possible, through the current form of the script and within its limitations, the current standard pronunciation of each vocable of the sacred text.

Before closing, it may be pointed out that the correct intonation and pronunciation of sacred texts have always exercised the minds of enlightened followers. The dedication with which generations of Brahmins, especially South Indian, have tried to preserve the ancient modes of speech of the Vedas, is simply amazing. In fact, it was on account of such deep concern of scholars with pronunciation that much knowledge about the mechanics of language came into being. In the case of the Korān also, there is a regular tradition of specialization in the correct pronunciation of its sounds, namely, *alqira'at*. It is our intense desire that the compulsions of the transliteration of the *Gurū Granth Sāhib* into Devanāgarī be converted by Sikh scholars into a God-sent opportunity for the standardization of the pronunciation of their sacred book. Sardar Dhanna Singh's *Srī Gurū Granth Sāhib Jī dī Gurbāñī dā Shuddh Uchāraṇ* (Amritsar, 1966) is probably the only dissertation yet on this topic, but that also is neither exhaustive nor conclusive. The S.G.P.C. must utilize this opportunity to make its own specialists sit with the scholars from universities to settle this problem once for all, if possible. The principles enunciated by Guru Arjan Dev, the compiler of *Gurū Granth Sāhib* at the time of transliterating into Gurmukhī script, the composition of various saint-poets available probably in Devanāgarī and/or Persian scripts, may also be usefully studied.

Now follows the specimen of my transliteration :

Specimen of Transliteration

१ ओंकार सतिनाम करता पुरखु निर्भउ निर्वैरु अकाल मूरति अजूनी
सैभं गुर प्रसादि ॥ जपु ॥

आदि सच्चु जुगादि सच्चु ॥ है भी सच्चु नानक होसी भी सच्चु ॥१॥

सोचै सोचि न होवई जे सोचीं लक्ख वार ॥ चुपै चुप्प न होवई जे
लाइ रहौं लिव तार ॥ भुक्खिआँ भुक्ख न उतरी जे बन्हौं पुरीआँ भार ॥ सहस
सिआणपाँ लक्ख होहिं त इक्क न चल्लै नालि ॥ किव सचिआरा होईऐ किव
कूड़ै तुट्टै पालि ॥ हुकमि रजाई चल्लणा नानक लिखिआ नालि ॥१॥ हुकमीं
होवनि आकार हुकमु न कहिआ जाई ॥ हुकमीं होवनि जीअ हुकमि मिलै
वडिआई ॥ हुकमीं उतमु नीचु हुकमि लिखि दुख सुख पाईअहिं ॥ इकनाँ
हुकमीं बखसीस इक्कि हुकमीं सदा भवाईअहिं ॥ हुकमै अंदरि सभु को बाहरि
हुकम न कोइ ॥२॥ नानक हुकमै जे बुझै त हउमै कहै न कोइ ॥२॥ गावै
को ताणु होवै किसै ताणु ॥ गावै को दाति जाणै नीसाणु ॥ गावै को गुण
वडिआईयाँ चार ॥ गावै को विदिआ विखमु वीचार ॥ गावै को साजि करे
तनु खेह ॥ गावै को जीअ लै फिरि देह ॥ गावै को जापै दिस्सै दूरि ॥ गावै
को वेखै हादरा हदूरि ॥ कथना कथीं न आवै तोटि ॥ कथि कथि कथीं कोटीं
कोटि कोटि ॥ देंदा दे लेंदे थकि पाहिं ॥ जुगाँ जुगंतरि खाही खाहिं ॥ हुकमीं
हुकमु चलाए राहु ॥ नानक विगसै वेपरवाहु ॥३॥ साचा साहिबु साचु नाइ
भाखिया भाउ अपारु ॥ आखहिं मंगहिं देहि देहि दाति करे दातारु ॥ फेरि कि
अगै खखीऐ जितु दिस्सै दरबारु ॥ मुहौं कि बोलणु बोलीऐ जितु सुणि धरे
पिआरु ॥ अमृत वेला सच्चु नाँउ वडिआई वीचारु ॥ कमीं आवै कप्पड़ा नदरीं
मोखु दुआरु ॥ नानक एवै जाणीऐ सभु आपे सचिआरु ॥४॥ थापिया न जाइ
कीता न होइ ॥ आपे आपि निरंजनु सोइ ॥ जिनि सेविआ तिनि पाइआ मानु ॥
नानक गावीऐ गुणीं निधानु ॥ गावीऐ सुणीऐ मनि खखीऐ भाउ ॥ दुखु परहरि
सुखु घरि लै जाइ ॥ गुरुमुखि नादं गुरुमुखि वेदं गुरुमुखि रहिआ समाई ॥ गुरु
ईसरु गुरु गोरखु बरमा गुरु पार्वती माई ॥ जे हउं जाणां आखाँ नाहीं कहणा
कथनु न जाई ॥ गुरां इक्क देहि बुझाई ॥ सभनां जीआँ का इक्कु दाता सो
मैं विसरि न जाई ॥५॥

Computerization of Sikh Scriptural Research*

Computers are really the greatest wonder of modern science. *Time* magazine has chosen a computer as its "Man of the Year"—an honour that has previously always gone to distinguished statesmen, scientists, and men of letters. And *The Sikh Review* is not far behind with an article on computer that can delve into the intricacies of Sikh scripture with more accuracy and authenticity than that of the most diligent scholar.

It may not be possible for even a highly educated Indian, who had never had an opportunity to visit some of the world's technologically advanced countries, to imagine the speed with which computer technology is taking over from man not only his petty jobs but also the most complicated and the most highly sophisticated ones. One hardly finds an area of human endeavour which has not been infiltrated by the computer. The reason is not far to seek. Once the desired programme is fed into the machine, one can always be sure of its immaculate execution in a matter of seconds. Until I attended a seminar on "Early Devotional Literature in New Indo-Aryan Languages," held in Rheinische Friedrich Wilhelm University at Bonn (F.R.G.) from March 19, 1982 to March 21, 1982, I had known that computer-programmed printing was fast making all other types of printing obsolete, but never knew that it had penetrated even the highly personalized field of textual criticism, including collation of manuscripts. Two papers presented in the Seminar introduced the seminarians to the work that their writers

* First published in *The Sikh Review*, February, 1983, Kolkata, Vol. XXX, No. 350.

had been doing with the help of their computers. The first paper by Dr. Winand M. Callewaert of the Department of Oriental Studies, Katholieke Universiteit, Leuven (Belgium) dwelt on "Text Analysis with a Computer in Devanāgarī" and the other one by Dr. Kenneth E. Bryant of the Department of Asian Studies, University of British Columbia, Vancouver (Canada), discussed "The Fatehpur Manuscript and the Sur Sagar Critical Edition Project" which he was doing in all collaboration with Dr. John S. Hawley of the Department of Asian Languages and literature, University of Washington, Seattle (U.S.A.). Luckily, before my return to India, I was able to see both these scholars at work at their respective universities. To be honest, it was only after my personal experience with such computer work that I came to realize the full potentiality and implications of the machine's use for literary research, although Dr. Callewaert had already explained to me personally, during his last visit to my place, how he was using his computer for the collation of the manuscript of Bhagat Nāmdev and other medieval saint poets.

Extant Manuscripts Stored

My first intimate encounter with the computer occurred soon after I landed in Leuven in the company of my host, Dr. Callewaert, and our friend, Dr. Mukund Lath, after the closure of the seminar at Bonn. Dr. Callewaert's field of specialization being medieval devotional poetry of northern India, I had suggested that he should film and, if possible, store in the indelible memory of his computer, the most important extant manuscripts of the *Gurū Granth Sāhib*, as it still happened to be the oldest written record relating to most of the saint-poets of the period chosen by him for research. He had liked the idea and it was in anticipation of the happy prospect of being able, in the near future, to store the complete texts of selected manuscripts of the *Gurū Granth Sāhib* in his computer that he had invited me to teach Gurmukhī characters to his machine. The machine already knew Devanāgarī characters. In order to demonstrate to me the working of the computer, he went over the whole process, ab initio : from the formation of characters to their erasure and

replacement when necessary as well as their shifting by one or many spaces in the desired direction and their recall, whenever required, singly or in their composed form. He had already transferred to the computer's memory, the films that he had prepared of manuscripts in Indian homes and libraries. A few soft touches on some keys activated the machine, and it began to reproduce on its screen the first *abhaṅga* of Nāmdev. Then it was asked to let us know where the word *Nām* occurred in the whole text of the saint, and lo ! it began to print, *seriatim*, all the lines containing the desired word. Similarly for our benefit it could produce all the lines in which any other word or combination of words occurred. If required, it could reproduce all the lines which ended on a particular word or set of words. When it found that the words were not there in the text, it put a question mark on the screen. Whatever appeared on the T.V.-like screen of the machine could be printed simultaneously on a roll of paper. Later, when I went to the British Columbia University at Vancouver, I found Dr. Bryant's work on *Sūrdās* equally, if not more, exciting. Taking a cue from the excellent paper of Dr. Rupert Snell, of the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London, on "Metrical Forms in the Brij Bhasa Pada," which had been presented at the seminar, Dr. Bryant was trying to programme his highly trained computer to determine the rhythmic periods of Sur's verses in the hope of discovering a foolproof touchstone for separating Sur's authentic text from the spurious one !

Having been initiated into the world of the computer, I found my work of fashioning Gurmukhī characters and consigning them to the machine's memory quite scintillating as it held before me the welcome promise of facilitating and expediting most of the time-consuming and physically exhausting research work relating to the *Gurū Granth Sāhib*. I had before my mind's eye, the scene of late researcher, Bhai Randhir Singh, pouring over each short 'i' and short 'u' of the various manuscripts of the *Gurū Granth Sāhib* with only Nihang Tehal Singh to assist him. Also inscribed indelibly in my memory was the life-dedicating team of Bhais Joginder Singh Talwara, Joginder Singh Vedanti, Sewa Singh and others working

hard, under the direct supervision of Bhai Sahib Bhai Kirpal Singh, the then Head Priest of Sri Harimandir Sahib, over problems some of which the computer could have solved literally in the twinkling of an eye, and that, too, without any possibility of an error, depending, of course, on the health of the machine. I, therefore, set about my work on the university computer with enthusiasm. I was at my work for a fortnight and with Drs. Callewaert and Lath extending their experienced, helpful hands, the keyboard was finalized, except for some conjuncts occurring in the *Gurū Granth Sāhib*, which we decided to fill in later. As the keyboard had to be operated by Dr. Callewaert himself, after I had left Leuvin, it was decided to fix the sequence of characters not according to the frequency of their occurrence in Gurmukhī writing, but according to his convenience. His fingers moved quite nimbly on the Devanāgarī keyboard. So wherever possible, the Devanāgarī sequence of his keyboard was followed. What we were able to achieve within one fortnight may be seen in Appendix A, where the alphabet, along with the *mūl mantra* is given, and in Appendix B, where a letter, the text of which had been supplied earlier, was printed by Dr. Callewaert on his computer after I had left Belgium. This letter was posted to the President of Shiromaṇī Gurdwārā Prabandhak Committee, Amritsar, from whom I have been told, the learned Doctor is still awaiting a reply ! Being the first attempt of a person, not yet fully conversant with the Panjabi language and Gurmukhī script, the result is in no way discouraging. It may not be out of place to mention here that the shapes of the characters can be modified, within the space available, and made as artistically attractive as any designer may imagine.

Leuvin Experiment

Is there anything really exciting in the Leuvin Experiment ? Does it deserve the attention that it has been given in this article ?

Yes, I sincerely believe that the experiment breaks new ground, opens new vistas and is, therefore, worthy of immediate attention of Sikh intelligentsia.

Someone may justifiably ask, "But where does the attention-worthiness of the Leuvin Experiment lie?"

My answer to the query will be that

- (a) it lies firstly in its primacy. It is, as far as my knowledge goes, the first firm step towards the introduction of higher electronics in the field of higher research on the *Gurū Granth Sāhib*.
- (b) Secondly, it is there in its contagious power. It is certainly going to serve as an inspiration and mode for others. In Bonn itself, there were indications that the experiment may bring the *Gurū Granth Sāhib* into the scholarly focus of a few other learned European/American/Canadian orientalists.
- (c) Thirdly, and quite importantly, it lies in its challenge to Sikh scholarship. So far, Sikh scholars have been undisputed leaders in the field of higher research on the *Gurū Granth Sāhib*, but, just as foreign scholarship has outstepped them in the field of *Janam Sākhī* research, it will be no wonder, if with the facility of the latest technological aids at their disposal and the availability of trained personnel, European scholars leave behind the Sikhs even in their own preserve of scriptural research! One of the reasons which prompted the present writer to pen this article was to try to turn this challenge into an opportunity. Guru Nanak Foundation, New Delhi; Guru Gobind Singh Foundation, Chandigarh; Bhai Vir Singh Sahitya Sadan, New Delhi; Dr. Balbir Singh Sahitya Kendra, Dehradun; Shiromaṇī Gurdwārā Prabandhak Committee, Amritsar; Chief Khalsa Diwan, Amritsar; Delhi Gurdwārā Prabandhak Committee, Delhi; Universities of Panjab, and other similar bodies in and outside India have not engaged themselves yet in any outstandingly meaningful and sustained research on the *Gurū Granth Sāhib*, although the shortage of funds for this purpose could not have been their excuse. Actually, there has either been a dearth of ideas or what is more positively dangerous, a rather inhibitive, if not antagonistic approach towards scholars, because among

them are found people who refuse to modify or manipulate their findings to suit popular beliefs. Now, when hundreds of Sikhs have had the first hand experience of passing through different Indian and foreign universities for educational attainments and research, the complaint about the dearth of ideas may be easily set aside, but the prejudice against the imagined harm that honest scholarly research may entail, has to be fought to success by the collective strength of Sikh scholars themselves. There is such a vast field of unexplored work in the areas of Sikh scriptural orthography, diction, lexicography, collation, prosody, and comparative study that it should be possible to persuade the enlightened members of the bodies referred to above, to agree to jointly install a computer and put trained scholars at work so that the distinction of leadership in the field of scriptural research remains with the Sikhs.

However, whether the argument of leadership slipping out of Sikh hands appeals to the controlling authorities of various Sikh bodies or not, they may, at least, bless Dr. Callewaert and extend to him the goodwill he may need in his laudable but difficult venture.

APPENDIX-A

ੳ	ਊ	ਊ	ਊ	ੳ	ੳ		
ਅ	ਅੰ	ਆ	ਆਂ	ਇ	ਇੰ	ਈ	ਈਂ
ਏ	ਏਂ	ਐ	ਐਂ	ਐ	ਐਂ		
ੳ	ਅ	ੲ	ਸ	ਹ			
ਕ	ਖ	ਗ	ਘ	ਙ			
ਚ	ਛ	ਜ	ਝ	ਞ			
ਟ	ਠ	ਡ	ਢ	ਣ			
ਤ	ਥ	ਦ	ਧ	ਨ			
ਪ	ਫ	ਬ	ਭ	ਮ			
ਯ	ਰ	ਲ	ਵ	ੜ			
ਕ ਕੰ ਕ ਕਾਂ ਕਿ ਕਿੰ ਕੀ ਕੀਂ ਕੁ ਕੁੰ ਕੂ ਕੂਂ ਕੇ ਕੇਂ ਕੈ ਕੈਂ ਕੇ ਕੇਂ ਕੋ ਕੋਂ ਕ੍ਰ ਕ੍ਰ ਕ੍ਰ ਕ੍ਰਾਂ ਮ ਮੰ ਮਾ ਮਾਂ ਮਿ ਮਿੰ ਮੀ ਮੀਂ ਮੁ ਮੁੰ ਮੂ ਮੂਂ ਮੇ ਮੇਂ ਮੈ ਮੈਂ ਮੋ ਮੋਂ ਮੋ ਮੋਂ ਮੁ ਮੁੰ ੴ ਸਤਿਨਾਮੁ ਕਰਤਾ ਪੁਰਖੁ ਨਿਰਭਉ ਨਿਰਵੈਰੁ ਅਕਾਲ ਮੂਰਤਿ ਅਜੂਨੀ ਸੈਭੰ ਗੁਰ ਪ੍ਰਸਾਦਿ ॥							

APPENDIX-B

ਕੈਥੋਲਿਕ ਯੂਨੀਵਰਸਿਟੀ
ਲੈਇਵਨ, ਬੈਲਜੀਅਮ
28 ਮਈ, 1982

ਆਦਰਯੋਗ ਸਰਦਾਰ ਸਾਹਿਬ,

ਲੈਇਵਨ ਯੂਨੀਵਰਸਿਟੀ, ਬੈਲਜੀਅਮ, ਅੱਠ ਸੌ ਸਾਲ ਪੁਰਾਣੀ ਯੂਨੀਵਰਸਿਟੀ ਹੈ। ਇਸ ਵਿਚ ਮੈਂ ਪੂਰਬੀ ਸਾਹਿਤ ਦੇ ਵਿਭਾਗ ਦਾ ਮੁਖੀ ਹਾਂ। ਏਥੇ ਅਸੀਂ ਮੱਧ ਕਾਲ ਦੇ ਭਗਤੀ ਸਾਹਿਤ ਉੱਤੇ ਖੋਜ ਜਾਰੀ ਕੀਤੀ ਹੋਈ ਹੈ। ਭਗਤ ਕਬੀਰ, ਭਗਤ ਨਾਮਦੇਵ ਤੇ ਹੋਰ ਭਗਤਾਂ ਦੇ ਖਰੜੇ ਜਿਥੋਂ ਵੀ ਮਿਲੇ ਹਨ ਮੈਂ ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਦੀਆਂ ਫਿਲਮਾਂ ਤਿਆਰ ਕਰ ਕੇ ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਉੱਤੇ ਆਪਣੇ ਵਿਭਾਗ ਵਿਚ ਖੋਜ ਸ਼ੁਰੂ ਕਰਵਾਈ ਹੋਈ ਹੈ। ਪਹਿਲਾਂ ਅਸੀਂ ਆਪਣੀ ਕੰਪਿਊਟਰ ਮਸ਼ੀਨ ਨੂੰ ਦੇਵਨਾਗਰੀ ਸਿਖਾਈ ਸੀ। ਪਿਛਲੇ ਹਫ਼ਤੇ ਤੋਂ ਅਸੀਂ ਇਸ ਨੂੰ ਗੁਰਮੁਖੀ ਵੀ ਸਿਖਾ ਦਿੱਤੀ ਹੈ। ਹੁਣ ਅਸੀਂ ਇਸ ਵਿਚ ਗੁਰੂ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਦੀਆਂ ਪੁਰਾਣੀਆਂ ਬੀੜਾਂ ਦੇ ਖਰੜੇ ਭਰਨਾ ਚਾਹੁੰਦੇ ਹਾਂ ਤਾਂ ਜੋ ਉਹ ਹਮੇਸ਼ਾ ਲਈ ਸਾਂਭੇ ਜਾਣ। ਇਹ ਮਹਿਕਮਾ ਦੁਨੀਆ ਵਿਚ ਪਹਿਲੀ ਵਾਰੀ ਇਹ ਕੰਮ ਛੁਹਣ ਲੱਗਾ ਹੈ। ਆਪ ਦੀ ਸਿੱਖ ਰੈਫ਼ਰੈਂਸ ਲਾਇਬ੍ਰੇਰੀ ਵਿਚ ਗੁਰੂ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਦੇ ਕਈ ਕੀਮਤੀ ਖਰੜੇ ਹੋਣਗੇ। ਮੈਂ ਆਪਣੀ ਲਾਇਬ੍ਰੇਰੀ ਲਈ ਇਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਖਰੜਿਆਂ ਦੀਆਂ ਫੋਟੋਆਂ ਲੈਣੀਆਂ ਚਾਹੁੰਦਾ ਹਾਂ। ਏਥੇ ਆ ਕੇ ਇਹ ਸਾਰੀ ਸਾਮਗਰੀ ਕੰਪਿਊਟਰ ਵਿਚ ਭਰ ਦਿੱਤੀ ਜਾਵੇਗੀ।

ਮੈਂ ਅਗਲੇ ਸਾਲ ਜਨਵਰੀ ਵਿਚ ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤਸਰ ਪਹੁੰਚਾਵਾਂ। ਆਪ ਫੋਟੋਆਂ ਲੈਣ ਦੀ ਆਗਿਆ ਭੇਜ ਸਕੋ ਤਾਂ ਬੜੀ ਕਿਰਪਾ ਹੋਵੇਗੀ।

ਤੁਸੀਂ ਖੁਸ਼ ਹੋਵੋਗੇ ਕਿ ਮੈਂ ਆਪ ਨੂੰ ਇਹ ਚਿੱਠੀ ਕੰਪਿਊਟਰ ਵਿਚ ਭਰੀ ਗੁਰਮੁਖੀ ਨਾਲ ਟਾਈਪ ਕਰ ਕੇ ਭੇਜ ਰਿਹਾ ਹਾਂ।

ਪ੍ਰਧਾਨ ਸ਼੍ਰੋਮਣੀ ਗੁਰਦੁਆਰਾ ਪ੍ਰਬੰਧਕ ਕਮੇਟੀ
ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤਸਰ, ਪੰਜਾਬ

ਆਪ ਦਾ ਹਿਤੂ,
(ਡਾਕਟਰ ਵਿਨਾਂਤ ਕਲਵਾਰਤ)

Dr. W.M. CALLEWAERT
Dept. Oriental Studies
Blijde Inkomststraat 21
3000 LEUVEN-BELGIUM

The Significance of Sikh Baptism*

Some aspects of Guru Gobind Singh's extraordinary career are very well known. For instance, his readiness to sacrifice everything dear to him for public weal is one such aspect. The series of sacrifices began with his innocent remark in the presence of his father, Guru Tegh Bahadur, that in case the martyrdom of a saintly person could put an end to the religio-political persecution going on in Kashmir and in other parts of India, then there could be no better person than his father for such sacrifice ! The father accepted the suggestion of his young son and was martyred in Delhi on 11 November, 1675 at the behest of Mughal emperor, Aurangzeb. Later, the father's martyrdom was followed by the martyrdom of all his four sons, his mother and a large number of his trusted lieutenants. Anandpur, his favourite abode and a symbol of autonomy, was also run over.

The great Guru's very difficult circumstances brought to light another of his shining quality—his indomitable courage. He refused to be cowed down by any adversity, howsoever frightening. All chroniclers are unanimous in paying glowing tributes to the Guru's heroic spirit which inspired 'even sparrows to overpower hawks'. It must not be forgotten that, basically, the Guru was a deeply religious person, a spiritual guide, who regarded cowardice as totally antithetical to the type of saintliness that he had inherited from the Guru-tradition, founded by Guru Nanak Dev. Among the medieval India's men of letters, Guru Nanak Dev was probably the only poet in whose work, sensitive concern towards dignity of honour occurs time and again. In one of his verses he says, "O Nanak ! one can

* This paper was written specially for Anandpur Sahib Foundation, Chandigarh in 1999 on the occasion of Tercentenary of the Birth of Khalsa.

be weighed properly with the weights of honour only.”¹ In another famous *shabad*, in which he describes the havoc caused by Babar’s army in Aimanabad (West Punjab, now in Pakistan), he exclaims, “My God ! What a terrible punishment did the wailing Indians receive ! Yet, their pitiable condition did not move Thee at all ! O My Lord ! Is everyone not Thy progeny ? My mind would not be aflame if the contending parties were equally strong, but when a lion pounces upon and mauls a herd of cows, should not the keeper of cows be held accountable ?”² It is the same reaction, heightened by many degrees, that is found in Guru Gobind Singh, who believed that “in the event of the failure of all possible avenues of peaceful settlement, taking up arms (in self-defence against the aggressor) has full religious sanction.”³ (*Zafarnāmah*, Guru’s Epistle of Victory to Emperor Aurangzeb).

Yet another aspect of the Guru’s unusual personality was his creative contribution to literature. He was a poet who has left a voluminous body of his poetical works in Braj, Panjabi, and Persian languages. The following famous hymn represents one type of his devotional output.

The Hindu Temple and the Muslim mosque are *essentially* one.
The Hindu way of worship and the Muslim *namāz* serve the same purpose.

Mankind is one, though it may give the impression of many.
Gods and demons, *Yakshas* and *Gāndharvas*, Hindus and Mussalmans look different because they are differently clad in different climes.

All human beings have similar eyes, similar ears and similar physiological frames.

Everyone is made of the same earth, air, fire and water.

Behind different Muslim and Hindu nomenclatures for God, lies

1. ਪਤਿ ਪਰਵਾਣਾ ਪਿਛੈ ਪਾਈਐ ਤਾ ਨਾਨਕ ਤੋਲਿਆ ਜਾਪੈ॥ *Sri Gurū Granth Sāhib*, p. 469

2. ਏਤੀ ਮਾਰ ਪਈ ਕੁਰਲਾਣੇ ਤੈ ਕੀ ਦਰਦੁ ਨ ਆਇਆ॥੧॥

ਕਰਤਾ ਤੂੰ ਸਭਨਾ ਕਾ ਸੋਈ॥ ਜੇ ਸਕਤਾ ਸਕਤੇ ਕਉ ਮਾਰੇ ਤਾ ਮਨਿ ਰੋਸੁ ਨ ਹੋਈ॥੧॥ਰਹਾਉ॥

ਸਕਤਾ ਸੀਹੁ ਮਾਰੇ ਪੈ ਵਰੈ ਖਸਮੇ ਸਾ ਪੁਰਸਾਈ॥

ibid., p. 360

3. ਚੂ ਕਾਰ ਅਜ ਹਮਹ ਹੀਲਤੇ ਦਰ ਗੁਜਸਤ

ਹਲਾਲ ਅਸਤ ਬੁਰਦਨ ਬ ਸਮਸੀਰ ਦਸਤ॥

the same divinity; The *Purānas* and the *Qurān* are the same.
The same Being permeates the whole cosmos.⁴

The thematic, structural, metrical and musical variety of the Guru's poetry and his management of the auditory and structural possibilities of language is bewildering. Does anyone need to be told that the following soulful piece relates to a battle-scene ?

ਕਾਗੜਦੇ ਕਾਤੀ, ਕਟਾਰੀ ਕੜਾਕੇ। ਤਾਗੜਦੇ ਤਰਹੇ, ਤੁਪੱਕ ਤੜਾਕੇ।
ਝਾਗੜਦੇ ਨਾਗੜਦੇ, ਬਾਗੜਦੇ ਬਾਜੇ। ਗਾਗੜਦੇ ਗਾਜੀ, ਮਹਾਂ ਗਜ ਗਾਜੇ ॥112॥
ਸਾਗੜਦੇ ਸੂਰੇ ਕਾਗੜਦੇ ਕੋਪੇ। ਪਾਗੜਦੇ ਪਰਮੇ, ਰਣੇ ਪਾਵੇ ਰੋਪੇ।
ਸਾਗੜਦੇ ਸਸਤ੍ਰ ਝਾਗੜਦੇ ਝਾਰੇ। ਬਾਗੜਦੇ ਬੀਰੇ ਡਾਗੜਦੇ ਡਕਾਰੇ ॥113॥

Besides being an original poet, he was very liberal in extending his patronage to other litterateurs, scores of whom had become regular part of his entourage. Hans Ram, who translated into Braj poetry the chapter entitled "KARNA" of the Mahabharata, states that a sum of *takās* 60,000 was bestowed upon him by the Guru in appreciation of his work.

A qualitatively different, rather unique occurrence in the Guru's life, was this creation of the Order of the Khalsa. Before initiating the process that fructified in this historic development, he must have spent many a sleepless night analysing the factors that were responsible for the debilitating psychological and physical reaction of the Indian people against all aggressions. His findings, like Guru Nanak's, were that inbuilt discrimination in social classification and loss of self-respect, due to moral and spiritual degradation, were the villains of the piece. The institution of the Khalsa, as conceived by Guru Gobind Singh, was to wipe out all invidious distinctions between man and man, besides arousing the consciousness of human

4. ਦੇਹੁਗ ਮਸੀਤ ਸੋਈ ਪੂਜਾ ਐ ਨਿਵਾਜ ਓਈ
ਮਾਨਸ ਸਭੈ ਏਕ ਪੈ ਅਨੇਕ ਕੋ ਭੁਮਾਉ ਹੈ।
ਦੇਵਤਾ ਅਦੇਵ, ਜਛ ਗੰਧਬ ਤਰਕ ਹਿੰਦੂ
ਨਿਆਰੇ ਨਿਆਰੇ ਦੋਸਨ ਕੇ ਭੇਸ ਕੋ ਪ੍ਰਭਾਉ ਹੈ।
ਖਾਕ ਬਾਦ ਆਤਿਸ ਐ ਆਬ ਕੋ ਰਲਾਉ ਹੈ॥
ਅਲਹ ਅਭੇਖ ਸੋਈ, ਪੁਰਾਨ ਅਉ ਕੁਰਾਨ ਓਈ
ਏਕ ਹੀ ਸਰੂਪ ਸਭੈ, ਏਕ ਹੀ ਬਨਾਉ ਹੈ।

Randhir Singh, Bhair (ed.), *Shabdārth Dasam Granth Sāhib*, Vol. 1, p. 26.

5. *Ibid.*, p. 138.

dignity even among those people who had all along been regarded as fit to occupy only the outskirts of community life. The distinctive contribution of Guru Gobind Singh lay in giving these ideas an institutional status. It should be of interest to the social workers of our time to understand how the Guru proceeded to create a new socio-spiritual order out of the existing mess.

The Guru, as has been stated earlier, was a deeply religious person. He was the tenth Master of the Sikh religious community. Sikh (Skt. *Shishya*) means a 'disciple'. This new community of disciples was trained to accept discipline as the prescribed mode of its life. The Guru was, therefore, confident that the community would accept all changes that he proposed to introduce in its personal and collective code of conduct. Later events proved that the Guru's assessment of his people was correct. Of course, there were a few murmurs among a section of Sikhs, but soon the Guru's thinking caught on and those who followed him became the main-stream of the community. Looking back, one may justifiably assert that the implications of the Guru's innovations went much beyond the frontiers of his community and had universal applicability. In fact, it was and continues to be totally relevant for improving the pan-Indian socio-political scene. Unfortunately, Sikhs, who claim to be his followers, have neither understood nor followed faithfully the Guru's programme of social integration.

Now we shall see how the Guru went about tackling the onerous task that he had set before himself.

To begin with, the Guru sent urgent invitations to his followers throughout India to celebrate the Baisakhi festival of the Year 1699 at Anandpur. The auspicious nature of Baisakhi was ingrained in the mass mind, especially of northern India. The Sikhs from all quarters responded enthusiastically to the Guru's invitation. When everyone was seated under the huge canopy set up for the purpose, the Guru appeared suddenly on the stage, brandishing a sparkling unsheathed sword in his hand. His demeanour was stern and downright serious. The whole congregation was stunned when he roared, "Is there anyone in this vast congregation of Sikhs, who would willingly agree to part with his head for the sake of his Guru?" One person,

who broke the hush that had descended upon the congregation by coming forward, was taken by the Guru to the enclosure behind the stage. When the Guru returned on the stage, after a short while, his sword seemed thoroughly drenched in blood. He asked for another head and got one. He stopped asking for more heads when five Sikhs had come forward, one by one, to offer their heads to him. These persons, namely, Daya Ram, Dharam Das, Mohkam Chand, Sahib Chand and Himmat hailed from Lahore, Hastinapur, Dwarka, Bidar and Jagannath Puri, respectively, and belonged to different castes, three of which— calico-printer's, barber's and water-carrier's —were regarded as quite low in the social hierarchy. The Guru addressed them as his "Five Beloved Ones" (ਪੰਜ ਪਿਆਰੇ). These persons, were, naturally, highly committed Sikhs, but the Guru's premeditated future programme became clear only when he required even these Beloved Ones to undergo the *amrit* ceremony, before being induced into the Order of the Khalsa, his very dear brain-child.

Before the introduction of Guru Gobind Singh's *amrit* ceremony, the Sikhs used to be formally initiated into Sikh faith through a different ceremonial process, called *Pahul*. Water poured on the cleaned toe of the Guru was sipped by the prospective entrants into the Sikh fold. This ceremony was replaced by the new *amrit* ceremony, devised by the tenth Guru. It was more elaborate, more impressive and, therefore, psychologically, more lasting in effect than the previous *Pahul* ceremony.

For the actual ceremony, as it is conducted today, one has to imagine an enclosure in which is installed the sacred book of the Sikhs, *Srī Gurū Granth Sāhib*, bedecked with costly coverings. A Sikh is seated cross-legged, waving a white fly-whisk over the covered book, ready to uncover it, in order to intonate the sacred text at the right moment. A team of five *amritdhārī*⁶ Sikhs, wearing similar uniforms, sitting in the *bīrāsān*⁷ posture, around an iron bowl full

6. The Baptized Ones.

7. The hero-posture "consists of placing the right knee on the ground with the heel forming the stool and seat for the body, while the left knee points heavenwards, and the left toe is firmly planted on the ground." Kapur Singh, *Parasara prasna*, 1989, Amritsar, Guru Nanak Dev University, pp. 52-53.

of sweetened water, with their hands clasping the bowl and stirring the contents, by turns, with a double-edged sword and chanting the prescribed sacred verse, again by turns, but fixing their gazes unitedly on the water in the bowl.

By the time the chanting and the stirring part is over, the aspirants, charmed by the mystique inherent in the whole activity, are ready to subject their wills to the combined will of the five masters who control the whole operation inside the enclosure. When handfuls of the mystically-charged *amrit* is splashed gently, five times into the eyes and for the same number of times on the hair-knots at the heads of the aspirants, also sitting in the *bīrāsana* posture, they are pliantly ready, when asked by one of the Beloveds to sip the remaining *Amrit*, one after the other, from the same bowl. (After Guru Gobind Singh had administered *amrit* to the five Beloved Ones, he did something which is unique in the annals of religious history. He requested his five *amritdhārī* Beloved Ones to admit him also to the Order of the Khalsa by administering *amrit* to him ! His wish was granted. This explains why he is remembered as "the Guru who was also a disciple.")

After administering the *amrit*, one nominated out of the Five Beloved Ones, explains to the aspirants the full significance of the ceremony in such words:

"You have been enrolled as members of the exalted Order of the Khalsa, according to whose Rules of Conduct, Guru Gobind Singh becomes your father and his wife, Sahib Kaur, your mother, immediately after enrolment. Further, all of you will assume Anandpur to be your birthplace. Also, with effect from the date of ceremony you will be considered to have severed all your connections with your previous faiths, beliefs, rites, customs, castes and birth-based, profession-based or family-based statuses. *Srī Gurū Granth Sahib* will form your only spiritual guide. Now you have all become equal members of the Khalsa Brotherhood."

The address by the Beloved One goes on to state that their new faith had a few do's and don'ts, along with a few other religious requirements, strict adherence to which would be expected from

them. For the purpose of this paper, only two injunctions may be mentioned. (A) Every Khalsa has to keep unshorn hair along with a comb; is always required to put on an underwear; has to wear an iron bangle on his right wrist and is ordained never to remain without a short sword on his person. (B) Among the strictly prohibited items is tobacco and other intoxicants in any form. The Five Beloved Ones have become a regular institution now. For any purpose, including that of *amrit* ceremony, any five able-bodied *amritdhārīs*, including women, may be asked to officiate for the original Five Beloved Ones.

Let us look beyond the religious elements of the *amrit* ceremony to understand its socio-political content, clearly. Three of the Five Beloved Ones were *dalits*. Even the Jatts (Dharam Das was a jatt) in those days were considered only one cut above the *dalits*. In the words of a contemporary of Guru Hargobind, Mohsin Fani, the celebrated writer of *Dabistān-i-Mazāhib*, "they (i.e., the jatts) are the lowest stratum of the Vaishyas." Thus, four out of the five Beloved Ones belonged to the marginalized communities of the medieval society. Guru Gobind Singh's religion could not but work for the upward mobility of these suppressed people. It is common knowledge that the Utopia of the Gurus, right from days of Guru Nanak, was a classless and casteless society, with no section suffering from any inbuilt social handicap. The customary embargoes on physical contact, entry into religious, residential, educational and cooking places of the twice-born Hindus was inconceivable in the social set up conceived by the Gurus. The Guru's *langar*⁸ was available to everyone without any consideration of the partaker's caste, creed, colour, race, or sex. By asking the Sikhs to sip *amrit* from the same bowl, Guru Gobind Singh was, in a way, inflicting the last fatal blow to the evil practice of untouchability. Among the Guru's followers, there were stray cases of Sikhs who shrank from the custom-breaking innovations of the Guru. The Guru, however, was determined to see his social programme through. He invested the *amritdhārī* Khalsa with a higher status than the ordinary Sikhs. He is believed to have made the following declaration :

8. Free food taken collectively with devotees sitting in row.

Verily, the Khalsa represents my faithful image.
I am, where the Khalsa is.⁹

In the *Dasam Granth*, his *magnum opus*, he says, “whatever I am, it is due to these people, otherwise there exist millions upon millions of poor people like me.”¹⁰ It is not difficult to imagine that such proclamations from the great Guru, the highest Sikh religious authority, must have silenced all doubting Thomases.

At a time, when the distribution of society on the basis of *varṇāśrama*—Brahmins, Kshatriyas, Vaishyas and Shudras—had acquired firm religious grounding and a quarter of Indian population was subjected to the extremes of exploitation and indignity, Guru Gobind Singh was busy laying the foundation of a community in which all human members were to be treated as equals. Real equality and fraternity may, therefore, be termed as Guru Gobind Singh’s underlying social ideal.

Guru Gobind Singh believed that no social organization can subsist honourably for long unless its members learn to ensure, severally and collectively, their own safety as well as that of others, who may be in need of it. Hence the sword, the ever-present companion of his Khalsa. It not only keeps the wearer vigilant but also serves as perpetual confidence-builder. Having attained equality with so-called high castes, for all practical purposes, a *dalit*, who is enrolled as a member of the Khalsa, is given training in martial arts to be physically fit so that he may look straight into the eyes of any tyrant. He does not remain a *dalit*. He becomes a full-fledged human being. Mahatma Gandhi had borrowed from medieval Indian devotional poetry the word *harijan* to denote a *dalit* but Guru Gobind Singh had already gone much further when he declared that *rañghretās*, the lowest among the so-called low castes, as ‘the Guru’s own sons’ !

In short, complete elimination of untouchability, the negation

9. ਖਾਲਸਾ ਮੇਰੇ ਰੂਪ ਹੈ ਖਾਸ ॥

ਖਾਲਸੇ ਮਹਿ ਹਉਂ ਕਰਹੂੰ ਨਿਵਾਸ ॥

(ਸੰਪੂਰਨ ਸ੍ਰੀ ਸਰਬਲੋਚ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਜੀ, ਸਿੰਘ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਬਾਬਾ ਜੰਤਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਜਥੇਦਾਰ, ਸਫਾ 667)

10. ਇਨਹੀ ਕੀ ਕ੍ਰਿਪਾ ਕੇ ਸਜੇ ਹਮ ਹੈ, ਨਹੀ ਮੇ ਸੇ ਗਰੀਬ ਕਰੋਰ ਪਰੇ ॥ ਸ੍ਰੀ ਦਸਮ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਸਾਹਿਬ, ਪੰਨਾ 717.

of theory of superior and inferior human beings, of differences based on racial or class or birth considerations and creating out of the available human material a coalesced people, were the great social transformations that the Guru had set before himself and *amrit* ceremony was one of the most effective of the ways that he devised to achieve these ends.

The Sikh Custom of Sharing Food*

The arrangement of periodical lectures on Sikh religious themes with an eye on providing opportunities to Singaporean youth to have direct intellectual interaction with students and scholars of Sikhism from abroad is a step in the right direction and certainly of far-reaching importance. I visualize that in course of time, direct contact with specialists on Sikh religion and history will help the younger generation in having deep insight and understanding of the historical significance and philosophical worth of the salient Sikh beliefs, practices, and institutions in a better way than would be possible through any other means. Further, the stimulating effect of such interaction may also be felt by members of non-Sikh communities of Singapore when they come to realize how deeply and sincerely concerned the Gurus of the Sikhs were about the spiritual, moral, and material betterment of Man and how simple, practical, and effective were the steps that they took to unshackle the human mind of fear, prejudice, and superstition.

I am convinced that, sooner than later, this endeavour of Sikh Advisory Board of Singapore is going to lead to regular exchange of knowledge among different religious communities of this country, thereby facilitating a sympathetic appraisal of one another's point of view. If my conviction proves to be prophetic and the programme turns out to be helpful in sustaining an atmosphere of goodwill and in strengthening fraternal bonds of the people of this picturesque country, the Sikh Advisory Board will certainly deserve a warm pat on its back.

* The text of "The Singapore Sikh Lecture" delivered on Dec. 30, 1990 in Singapore on the invitation of The Sikh Advisory Board.

It was quite generous on the part of the Board to have thought of me for exchange of views with the enlightened audience gathered here today, on a subject which is a bit unusual and, therefore, seems to have escaped the in-depth notice of many Sikh scholars. The subject seems to me to be rather unusual because it deals with as usual and commonplace an activity as eating ! But I have to confine myself strictly to that specific Sikh eating activity, called *Chhakṇā* in Punjabi, which is preceded by another activity, namely making other people eat. This is what *Waṇḍ Chhakṇā*, the subject of this discourse implies and it is exactly this implication that makes Sikh system of eating normatively distinguishable from the eating activity of all other peoples of the world.

In order to appreciate the validity of this claim to uniqueness, all the connotational contours of this term *Waṇḍ Chhakṇā* must be brought within our ken. The term is made up of two Punjabi words of Sanskrit origin, namely *Waṇḍ* (from Skt. *Want* : to divide, to apportion, etc.) and *Chhakṇā* (from Skt. *Chak* : to be satisfied). *Waṇḍ Chhakṇā* is a shortened form of *Waṇḍ ke Chhakṇā*. *Waṇḍ* means 'distribution, division, partition' and *Waṇḍ ke Chhakṇā* means, 'to eat after distribution or division'. As *Waṇḍ ke Chhakṇā* has now become a part of Sikh technical vocabulary, it has to be understood within its proper Sikh context. It means that food has been distributed voluntarily among other (presumably needy) people by the eater himself. This is the connotation of this term which is prevalent among Sikhs of all shades of opinion. But some users extend its semantic frontiers to make it stand metaphorically for part-distribution of all material possessions also.

It is this concept of eating after making others eat that strikes me as a singularly novel socio-religious phenomenon. Documentary evidence, culled from Sikh literature, is unanimous in supporting the idea of free distribution of food earned through one's own honest efforts. The phrase *Waṇḍ Chhakṇā* itself does not occur in *Srī Gurū Granth Sāhib*, but the idea has firm scriptural roots. Take for instance, the following verse which occurs in the *Vār of Rāga Sāraṅg* at page 1245 :

*Ghāl(i) Khāe kicch(u) bathab(u) de.
Nanak rāb(u) pachhāñaih se.*

“Says Nanak : he alone knows the (right) Path (leading to God), who eats the food acquired through the sweat of his own brow and gives away some (of it in charity).”

In this text, God is the destination, while hard labour and voluntary parting with some of its fruits have been identified as the two vehicles that can bring the Path within the seeker's reach. This idea of earning through hard and honest labour and sharing the earnings with others is the refrain of many hymns in the Sikh scripture. Guru Nanak himself returns to this idea in his *Vār* in *Āsā* musical mode, when he says :

Nanak, aggai so milai jo khatte, ghālai, Deb(i)

“O Nanak ! your sustenance in the next world will be proportionate to the hard labour put in this world for profitable returns and their (free and voluntary) distribution”.

It is out of such texts that the Sikh ethos has evolved a catchy formula which encapsulates three important do's of the Sikh Code of Conduct in three simple phrases. These are :

Nām Japnā, Kirt Karnī, Wand Chhaknā

“To utter or recite the Name of God, to work for one's livelihood, and to eat after distributing a part of one's food among others.”

Wand Chhaknā, with which we are primarily concerned here, forms the last part of this popular *mantra*. The point that is worth noting, in the scriptural texts and the *mantra* just quoted here, is that while the giver of charity is bound by the condition of honest earning, its receiver is not conditioned by any constraint at all. He may be any deserving person. Who does not know that charity loses its shine if it is robbed of its quality of universality ? After all, why is Man the king of all creation ? One reason given by Bhai Gurdas, a venerable name in Sikh exegetical literature, in the 3rd canto of his 1st *Vār* (ode) in favour of Man's prominence in this world is that he shares his own food with others. He puts it like this :

"Man works with his own hands,
Reaches the venue of religious congregations on his own feet,
Earns honest living through strenuous labour
And provides food to others from his own earnings."

This unconditional relation between income earned through hard and honest work and its part-disposal for charitable purposes, especially on feeding other people, occurs again and again in Bhai Gurdas's poetry, but I need not quote the same authority for the same purpose. I, therefore, pass on to Bhai Desa Singh who was one of the codifiers of Do's and Don'ts for the Sikhs. In his *Rehatnāmā* (The Code of Conduct), he writes :

"A Sikh should never take his food singly;
He has to share it with others."

It should be interesting to recall what Waris Shah, rated by some critics as the greatest Panjabi poet, said in his *Heer* :

Wāris Shāh lukāi-ey khalq kolon,
bhāven āpnā hī gur khāie jī.

(O Waris Shah ! even when you are eating
your own poor jaggery, conceal it from the public gaze).

Was it fear of jealousy or pollution by content with the so-called low castes that gave birth to this isolationism in eating ? The Gurus demolished both the caste-barrier and selfish privatization of food by insisting on the practice of shared eating.

Now we shall see what *Prem Sumārg*, an 18th century anonymous book on Sikh polity and manners, has to say on *Wand Chhakṇā* :

"If you come across someone who is hungry, without clothes and needy, then you have to share with him whatever food and clothing God may have given you."

Here, apart from presuming that the act of Sikh charity operates on all deserving cases, the author enlarges the semantic extent of *Wand Chhakṇā* from the fulfilment of eating needs of people to that of the fulfilment of all their needs.

Elucidating this aspect of *Wand Chhakṇā* further, the author of *Navin Panth Prakāsh*, says :

"As soon as food is ready
The Sikh should exclaim repeatedly,
Come along, one and all,
who need food; all are welcome;
The cooked food of the Guru is ready"

At this moment, even if an enemy turns up, he has to be fed like a dear friend. No distinction is to be made between a friend and a foe. The residue, if any, is to be eaten by the Sikh himself. In case nothing is left, he has to do without it. No other writer has expressed the real spirit underlying the Sikh concept of *Waṇḍ Chhakṇā* better than the writer of *Panṭh Prakāsh*. He does not expand semantic horizons of eating to make it stand for general purpose charity, but takes the distribution part of eating to its logical end. If the demand exceeds the supply and the supply cannot be replenished immediately, the supplier himself has to rest content with an empty stomach.

Lastly, we take up Bhai Santokh Singh. The following quotation is from *Nanak Prakāsh* (ed. By Bhai Vir Singh, 1928, Amritsar, p. 1122) and the speaker is the Guru :

"You will always find me there
Where the congregation of the devotees is;
Serve all the saints well
And spend your time in their company.
Let your belief be firm
That the saint is one with God.
Do honest work and take your food
Only after a part has been distributed among others..."

It may be noted that in the last line of the just-quoted stanza—*dharam kritt kar Waṇḍ so khāo*—*Waṇḍ khāṇā* is a paraphrase of *Waṇḍ Chhakṇā*; *Chhakṇā* and *khāṇā* being synonymous in Panjābī language.

As for quotations from Sikh literature, I hope the ones that I have given are enough to prove that whoever may have been responsible for restructuring the scriptural intentions into the prevalent form of *Chhakṇā*—the concept underlying its last part, i.e., *Waṇḍ Chhakṇā* (sharing food) has as authoritative a sanction behind

it, as the other two preceding concepts of *Nām japṇā* (recitation of Name) and *Kirt karnī* (working for livelihood) have.

The Sikh obsession with providing food to all, assumes another form also in which a majority of the members of Sikh community get involved. It is called *laṅgar* which is a Persian word generally associated with alms-places from where cooked food could be had *gratis* by visiting mendicants. As compared to this, the Sikh *laṅgar*, besides filling the human stomachs, also serves as a social leveller by breaking caste-based exclusions. Eating in the Sikh *laṅgar* or the Community Kitchen, is considered by members of the community as a work of religious merit. It is, therefore, not only visited by the have-nots but by all social classes. *Laṅgar* is almost a necessary adjunct of all Sikh religious prayer-halls, called *Gurdwārās*. Eaters may leave the place of *laṅgar* after taking meals without fear of any demand for payment of any bill or tip or donation. Funds for foodstuffs, kitchenware, and seating arrangements come from voluntary donations in cash and/or in kind. Whenever these happen to be in short supply, an appeal in the *Gurdwārā* usually does the needful, otherwise the managers fall back upon the general budget of the *Gurdwārā*. All effort is put in to see that the two, three or four-time, routine of the *laṅgar* service is maintained without any break. Whenever there is a big conference, a festival or a natural or man-made calamity, Sikhs may be depended upon to appear on the scene to make arrangements for free board to thousands of people congregating there. A recent example, much-publicized and greatly appreciated by the media and the people, was the setting up of 24-hour *laṅgars* for thousands of Indians returning from Arab countries in view of the tense situation obtaining there. It is worth noting that very few among the beneficiaries of these *laṅgars* were Sikhs and, as we all know, Sikhs are a very small community in Bombay where *laṅgars* were set up. With this background in mind, if someone were to interpret *Waṇḍ Chhakṇā* as part-distribution of one's own possessions by Sikh individuals and *laṅgar* as part-distribution of the corporate means of the whole community in the interest of humanity, he will be perfectly justified.

Such continued altruistic self-dispossession, as the traditions of *Wand Chhakṇā* and *langar* signify, both at the private and the corporate levels, is to say the least, not a very common occurrence in our world. To understand what motivates Sikhs to tread this path, we shall have to explore the religio-cultural system that determines the psychological make-up of this community. It may not be known to many people that every morning when a Sikh visits his *Gurdwārā*, he hears Guru Nanak exhort thus in the *Vār* of *Rāga Āsā* :

Jis kā dittā khāwanā tis kabīai sābās.

Thanks are due to Him,
who provides all that we eat.

Guru Ram Das, the Fourth Master, reiterates the same idea in this *Vār* of *Rāg Sorath*, when he says :

Terā dittā Khāwanā...

All that we eat is your gift, O God !

Therefore, if Sikhs part with some of their culinary possessions gladly, it is because the Guru desires it to happen that way. If they turn their faces towards God, it is their right to do so; if they work hard to earn their living, again, it is their right to do so; if they prefer honesty to dishonesty in work, they have the right to do so, but they are advised by their scriptures not to apply the absolute right of proprietorship to the food that they may have procured for their own consumption. Food is God's property; it is a gift from Him to mankind and is, therefore, as much mine as thine. The message comes clear and loud from the Gurus that their Sikhs must share their food with others before consuming it themselves. In fact, it is not only food but their wealth as well which they are required to share. A devout Sikh has to part with 10% of the net share of his income voluntarily for social welfare.

Along with such instructions, Sikhs come across verse after verse in their scripture which emphasizes the spiritually edifying role of providing the benefit of all psycho-somatic faculties to fellow human beings. *Sewā*, as this action is called, is a major tenet of Sikhism and implies dedicated and voluntary social service. "In Sikhism", says Bhai Kahn Singh, the compiler of the great

Encyclopaedia of Sikh Religion and Literature in Punjabi, "Sewā has much greater significance than in other religions. The Guru has cut out his Sikhs as Servants of the Whole World." (*Gurmat Martand*, Part 1, p. 186). What sort of signals would the following verses send to the believers ?

Guru Nanak (in *Srī Rāga*/33) : "Service done in this world shall earn an honourable place in the next."

Guru Nanak (in *Rāga Āsā*/19) : "All beings are God's own creation, but gains will be reserved for those persons only who serve others."

Guru Amar Das (in *Rāmkalī Astpadī* /4) : "So long as you breathe, go on serving others; you will be admitted straight away to God's presence."

Bhai Gurdas : "Damned be the hands and feet that do not engage in voluntary service.

Whatever you may do (apart from service), will amount to fruitless activity."

Whenever the charitable disposition of a Sikh takes the tangible shape of *Waṇḍ Chhakṇā* or *laṅgar*, the inspiring impulse is derived from the concept of *Sewā* or dedicated service of humanity.

Ever since the appearance of Guru Nanak on the world scene, society has been subjected to scores of socio-political and economic experiments as a result of which millions of human beings had to be displaced and decimated and dozens of established systems had to be demolished in the name of ushering in better, thoroughly just, least exploitative and comprehensively developmental systems. With every upheaval, promises would become more profuse and attractive than before, but heaven itself seemed to alight on our earth when Lenin ascended the Czar's throne in Russia. It is most unfortunate that none of the these experiments, some of which were of global proportions and aimed invariably at smoother management of human affairs, should have succeeded to come up to their own loudly-trumpeted claims. We all know that nature does not tolerate vacuum for long, but unfortunately, it is equally intolerant of chaos and disorder, to which much of our regional, national, and world

history has been a sorry witness for a long time. The world's heart still aches for an atmosphere in which Man will be able to live in peace with himself, with others of his species and with nature. But what is actually in store for him is anybody's guess. There is no shortage of soothsayers who predict further collapse of moral values, greater erosion of basic human rights, plenty of violence, exploitation, hunger, and decomposition of human bodies in vales of blood. This world of ours is so sweet and charming and so eminently livable that all its inhabitants should shudder at the prospect of persons, known for their bloated passions of lust, anger, avarice, ego, etc., taking control of the reins of governments and thereby ensuring a catastrophic end to the whole cosmic drama (*Jagat tamāshā*).

I hope no one wants such horrendous finale of our temporal abode to disturb his sleep. If this is the situation in which man finds himself today, then the best of our minds have to get together to diagnose where the disease lies. May be, they come to the conclusion that all behavioural aberrations, whatever be their nature, can be traced ultimately to man's base sentiments. Sentiments are related genetically to psyche, mind, and spirit.

The psychic, psychiatric, mental, or spiritual disasters can respond to psychic, psychiatric, mental, and spiritual treatment only and to no somatic treatment of the body. Guru Nanak's analysis of the then-prevailing situation confirms this analysis. In one of his most perceptive observations he says,

"If the mind gets alienated, one's own country becomes an alien land....." (*man pardesī je thīai, sabh des parāyā.....*)"

One may not try to justify why the bulk of the Guru's work is dedicated to advising ways and means of inculcating, recouping, and maintaining spiritual health among individuals, of which all societies are made of. There are things which, according to him, man must do to get rid of psychic and spiritual diseases and there are other things from which he must distance himself if he wishes to maintain the health of his mind and spirit. But Guru Nanak's medication did not end with the restoration of an individual's mental health. Individuals have to live with other individuals. They are born

members of one or the other society. Is it not everybody's observation that the behaviour of an individual is governed, at least to some extent, by his eco-social conditions ?

Guru Nanak's treatment covered maintenance of social health also. The formula that I have quoted earlier—*Nām Japṇā, Kirt Karnī, Wanḍ Chhakṇā*—is one such prescription, based on the advice of Guru Nanak, which takes care of the health of the individual (*Nām Japṇā*) along with that of the society (*Kirt Karnī* and *Wanḍ Chhakṇā*).

Before closing, I would like to pose a question. Is it really beyond the combined wisdom of all homo-sapiens to devise a fool-proof socio-economic system which will protect with certainty every able-bodied person's right to work with honesty and ensuring simultaneously for all human beings the right to have bellies full with nutritious food, so that the Guru's intention underlying the injunction on sharing of food is materialized ?

Baba Dayal Ji*

When my dear friend Dr. Man Singh Nirāṅkāri approached me to participate in the Baba Dayal Seminar with my contribution on Baba Dayal Ji, I told him apologetically that I knew nothing about the great person he had named and, therefore, expressed my inability to be of any help to him. Doctor Nirāṅkāri sent me a couple of books, including one entitled *Baba Dayal*, in English. As I went through it, I was impressed with the socio-cultural impact made by Baba Ji on a section of the Pothohāri Sikhs during the early years of 19th century. In fact, I felt a little embarrassed that I had all along been almost completely blank about this highly committed Sehjdhāri activist who was ready to suffer social boycott but would not allow *Gurmat*, the Guru's philosophy, to be misinterpreted either by word of mouth or by practice. I therefore, thank Dr. Man Singh for enriching my mind with information on a subject that had remained out of my reach till then.

Baba Dayal (1783-1855), the founder of Nirāṅkāri Movement, was born in 1783 in Peshawar, the capital of North-Western Frontier Province of present Pakistan. Chronologically speaking, the Udāsīs, the Nirmal Pañthīs, and the Sewā Pañthīs preceded the Nirāṅkāri Movement among the Sikhs. The Udāsīs had established their own centres in and out of Punjab, even out of India and were busy in producing literature that euologised Guru Nanak and his son Baba Shree Chand. But the fact remains that Udāsīs almost always remained on the outskirts of the main Sikh society. The Nirmalās, also, like the Udāsīs, were celibates and had their own establishments

* Read in the Baba Dayal Seminar on 13 October, 2002 at Chandigarh.

where they produced literature. The Nirmalās, unlike the majority of Udāsīs, kept long hair and were closer to the main Sikh stream but like the Udāsīs, they were also busy in approximating *Gurbāṇī* to the classical Indian philosophy, especially *Vedānta*, without understanding the original activist philosophical, social, and cultural base of the Sikh movement. They also, like the Udāsīs, helped the resuscitation of the ritualistic system rejected by Guru Nanak Dev. The Sewā Paṁthīs were good people and used to provide succour to the deprived sections of society and the physically-challenged persons, and even to animals, but they also remained silent spectators to the rise of rituals and ceremonies, superstitions and idol-worship which the Hindu priestly class had re-introduced in the Sikh society. The main Sikh stream at that time was not worried about the deformities that had entered Sikh life-style but was more attuned to the glorious victories of Maharaja Ranjit Singh. If the whole of this socio-religious background is kept in view, then the single-handed effort of a Sehjdhārī Sikh of Pothohar to rejuvenate the rapidly deteriorating Sikh society on the basis of the original teachings of the Guru as contained in *Srī Gurū Granth Sāhib*, stands out as an unparalleled endeavour.

Baba Dayal was 19 years of age when he left Peshawar to settle in Rawalpindi, the epicentre thus of Pothohar. It was the time when Ahmad Shah Abdali had been finally ousted from the Punjab, Maharaja Ranjit Singh had established himself firmly at Lahore and had begun to conquer the small principalities around Lahore. Baba Dayal was neither interested in the exploits of the conqueror nor in the plight of the vanquished. His whole attention was directed solely towards the socio-religious confusion that prevailed around him. Whatever he had heard from his mother or had learnt from the singers of the Gurdwārā of Bhai Joga Singh was completely at variance with what the ordinary Sikhs were doing in practice. He felt greatly upset when he saw this dichotomy prevailing around him. A point came when he could not tolerate this self-deceiving behaviour of Sikh society any further. He was so much in tune with the teachings of *Srī Gurū Granth Sāhib* that he could not

compromise with sham. The Gurus had clearly rejected *karam kāṛid* but here he saw it flourishing among those whose veneer of allegiance to the Guru had become extremely thin. He believed that God had no form and therefore the worship of idols was untenable. He rejected all superstitions, rituals and *prohit*-led ceremonies relating to births, deaths and marriages, etc., as being un-Sikh. He felt that the Sikhs were insulting their own Guru by violating his clear instructions.

II

Baba Dayal used to go regularly to the religious place called *Pishauriān dī Dharamsālā*. Inside the walled structure, they used to worship idols of Hindu gods and goddesses along with *Srī Gurū Granth Sāhib*. There was a plethora of rites and ceremonies which were conducted under the guidance of Brahmin priests. It was 1815 when he began to denounce these practices openly. What followed his action and the way he stood firm against all odds, singles him out as a person with extraordinary grit and determination. He was debarred from entering the *dharamsālā*. Undaunted, he got a new *Gurdwārā* built where unadulterated *gurmat* reigned supreme. He was excommunicated from his community. He accepted this punishment without any remorse and never agreed to back-track from his stand. So much so, even the doors of the cremation ground were shut on his co-believers. He instructed his followers to let the dead bodies be carried away by the flowing waters of the nearby river. He was adamant that whatever was written in *Srī Gurū Granth Sāhib* had clearly showcased the life-styles of its believers. He had unflinching faith in the spiritual efficacy and validity of the Sikh scripture. His interpretations of the sacred text were always based on internal evidence. He did not try, like the Udāsīs and the Nirmalās, to approximate *gurmat* with the Vedas, Upnishads, and other Indian classics to establish the authenticity of the Guru's message. For him, the sacred text of his Guru was self-supporting and needed no other crutches to stand upon. He never thought of establishing his leadership in his community by surrendering any part of his

puritanic faith. He was firm in his faith that the society around him was going astray and he was giving it the right direction.

If I place Baba Dayal Ji's struggle in the historical perspective of the Sikh community, then he appears to be the first person to have established the independent nature of the Sikh system of belief and conduct. The majority of Sikh people had emanated from the Hindu stock and if their ancestral beliefs, customs, and rites were allowed to continue among the Sikh converts and the worship of the idols of the traditional gods and goddesses were to continue serving their spiritual needs, then the Sikhs could never be differentiated from the Hindus. I am not sure whether the Nirankāris have cared to point out Baba Dayal Ji's contribution in this field, but it is quite clear that those who trace the consciousness of Sikh identity to the divisive policy of the British or to the immediate martial requirements of the British rulers, or credit the Singh Sabha Movement with this achievement, may have to revise their opinions if they care to look at Baba Dayal's contribution towards this aspect a bit closely as the Baba's activities had begun before the British flag began flying over the Punjab territory.

III

The movement of self-purification started by Baba Dayal Ji did not spread much beyond the frontiers of Pothohar, while some other reformatory movements which had borrowed some inspiration from the Nirankāri Movement, such as the Nāmdhārī Movement and the Singh Sabha Movement, succeeded in occupying the centre-stage position. I am not in a position to document reasons for this stalemate but one reason seems to be the delimitation of Baba ji's focus to the Khatri community of Pothohār. Another reason may be the excessive involvement of the new Movement with the past. They had only one direction to look to and it opened towards their roots, with the result that no time was left for chalking out a common programme for the future development of the whole Sikh community. The *pañth* unfortunately remained out of their focus.

Supposing one were to accept the indivisible unity of the

Formless Being, bow before none but *Srī Gurū Granth Sāhib* and conduct all their birth, death, and marriage ceremonies as directed by Baba Dayal Ji and his successors, what then would the Sikh community look forward to for its future ? Experience and history testify to the fact that such corruption-free life-styles with copious sprinkling of God's remembrance is not enough to create corporate movements for upward mobility. Namdhārī's began with similar clean life-style but they had to undergo extremes of mental and physical sufferings because they dared to colour their puritanism with political ambitions, much before the rise of Mahatma Gandhi on the Indian scene. If the Singh Sabha movement had not transformed itself into the Gurdwārā reform and Akali movements, it should not be difficult for any serious student of history to predict the future that would have been its destiny. The Nirankārīs escaped the mental and physical tribulations that the other movements faced for daring to look beyond their present. At present, the Nirankārī community is small in numbers but is still attached to *Srī Gurū Granth Sāhib* and claims that even now the life-style of their members is more akin to the original teachings of the great Gurus than that of other followers of Gurus. This is all well and good, but I would ask the elders of this small community one question : is the Nirankārī community satisfied with the ideological, moral, and cultural condition of the followers of *Srī Gurū Granth Sāhib* living all around them ? I have a feeling that had Baba Dayal Ji been alive today, he would not have been satisfied with the prevailing situation. It is possible that the members of the Nirankārī community are also not satisfied with the life-style of the contemporary Sikh society. If that be the position, then I would like to know what programme the community has devised for the future betterment of their own members and for the whole Sikh *Panṭh* in the 21st century which has already overtaken us ? Are they afraid of their miniscule numerical status as against the massive nature of the problem ? If so, I feel like drawing the attention of their leaders to the fact that the shortage of numbers never daunted Baba Dayal Ji from taking up his reformatory mission. He depended on the divine support and

regarded himself as good as an army consisting of *Sawā Lakh* activists. He was never afraid of the odds howsoever big against him.

I hope my Nirāṅkāri friends will excuse me if I remind them that action means Life, while certain Death lurks behind all stalemates. It is for the Nirāṅkāri community to decide which option will suit them best !

Maharaja Ranjit Singh's Relevance Today*

We know quite a bit about the private life of Maharaja Ranjit Singh, his conquests, his civil and military administration, the then prevalent agrarian system and his foreign policy.

As it always happens, the findings of our scholars on these and other similar subjects may throw fresh light but may not necessarily have any contemporaneous value. However, there is no dearth of subjects, research on which may yield results, quite relevant to the troubled times that we live in. In this short article, I propose to refer briefly to a less explored area in order to illustrate how research may be made purposeful.

The Maharaja and his forefathers with whom the Mughal, Afghan and Pathan forces had to measure arms in the Panjab were Sikhs. In the popular Sikh mind, the Mussalman rule was associated with extremes of tyranny and ruthless oppression. On the other hand, the popular Mussalman psyche regarded the Sikhs as boorish upstarts, absolutely unfit for the high seats of political authority to which they were wanting to be catapulted. These conflicting impressions had sunk deep in the minds of both the communities during the fierce struggle for power that went on throughout the eighteenth century and were still alive among many persons even after the Maharaja had taken firm control of the government. This is confirmed by mutually incriminating references found in contemporary literature. For example, in his *Ustat Guru Khalsa Shah Ki*, composed in A.D. 1830, Hakam Singh 'Darvesh' quotes the Maharaja as having uttered the following words while mourning the death of the militant Akali Phula Singh :

* Keynote address delivered at a Seminar arranged by the Punjab Government at Guru Nanak Dev University, Amritsar on 1-3-1988.

ਕਹਿੰਦਾ, “ਖਾਲਸਾ ਜੀ! ਤੁਰਕਾਂ ਕਾਫ਼ਰਾਂ ਨੇ
ਮੇਰੇ ਕੱਢ ਖ਼ਜ਼ਾਨਿਓਂ ਲਾਲ ਚੁਣਿਆ॥28॥”

Putting the words ‘Kafar Turk’ in the mouth of the Maharaja for the defenders of Multan fort is symbolic of the intense contempt lurking in the mind of the writer against Mussalman community. Similarly, Ganesh Das, the author of *Fatehnāmā Guru Khalsa Jī Kā*, who interprets the same battle as the “Battle between Hindu and Mussalman faiths” and repeatedly calls the Maharaja as the ‘King of Hindus’ makes the readers believe that the Maharaja was sent by God “to destroy the Turks” :

ਦੁਸਟ ਬਿਡਾਰਨ ਕੋ ਲੀਨੋ ਅਵਤਾਰ ਆਪ
ਕਿਸਨ ਸਰੂਪ ਹਵੈ ਕੇ ਅਨੇਕ ਦੈਤ ਘਾਏ ਹੈਂ॥
ਤੈਸੇ ਰਣਜੀਤ ਸਿੰਘ ਤੁਰਕ ਸੰਘਾਰਨ ਕੋ
ਕਲ ਕੇ ਪ੍ਰਮਾਨ ਜਾਨ ਆਪ ਰੂਪ ਆਏ ਹੈਂ॥

In the other camp, Syed Ahmad Brelvi’s repeated calls to Mussalmans to join him in *Jehād* against the ‘infidels’, namely, Sikhs, were full of fire and brimstone, venom and vengeance, anger and hatred. The Maharaja was fully conscious of all this and succeeded not only in controlling, to a great extent, the virus of mutual hatred and distrust that plagued various sections of society but also in winning over the confidence, respect and affection of all the communities, including the recently-dispossessed Mussalmans inhabiting his empire. I am of the firm opinion that it is the job of our historians to pinpoint for us the antidotes that the Maharaja used so effectively to contain inter-community hatred, whose ferocious brunt had been borne among others, by him and his not-very-distant forefathers. In this connection, the most significant fact that needs to be kept in mind is that his antidotes did not require tooth for a tooth and eye for an eye. The Maharaja occupied Lahore in 1799 and died in 1839. Within these forty years a divided house had been so coalesced that his death evoked highly emotive and mournful responses from the people of all communities. The Punjabi poet Shah Muhammad’s passionate tribute to the late “Sarkār” provides only one specimen of a series of such heart-felt reactions.

What would have been the policy of a ruler of lesser parts, had

fortune thrust greatness upon him, in place of Ranjit Singh ? Perhaps, he would have allowed full play to his ire and spleen and taught a lesson of their lives to his Mussalman subjects, whose ruling co-religionists of the preceding century had perpetrated hair-raising tyrannies on the recalcitrant Sikhs. Such a ruler might have also recalled to his high-strung mind all the instances of collaboration by Hindus with the enemies of Sikhs and God knows what he would have done to wreak vengeance. I am sure, at the death of such a ruler, the majority of his subjects would have heaved sighs of relief and not many tears would have been shed. The case of Maharaja Ranjit Singh was just the opposite. Right from the age of 10, when he had to take charge of his father's territories, he began to have a close look at the dynamics of a plural society from the point of view of its governance. He deduced from the book of his life certain postulates, quite early in his career, and as soon as he was in a position to put them into practice, he did so. As he found them effective, he stuck to them religiously till the last day of his life. What is remarkable in his conduct is the fact that he did so even at the risk of a head-on collision with his fundamentalist co-religionists. What were these postulates like ? In the absence of a recorded version, they can be a fit subject for a guessing game. My own study of the patterns of behaviour that emerge from the Maharaja's life, work, and behests, have yielded the following suppositions that seem to have determined the internal and external policies of his State :

- (i) So long as the Panjab, or rather North-Western India, remains territorially fragmented, it will continue to serve as a convenient target for the depredatory instinct of our traditionally aggressive neighbours. The present fragmentation has, therefore, to go. It must be substituted by one vast empire stretching from Delhi to Kabul. Such an empire will put an automatic check on the impoverished but compulsive invaders coming from across the Hindu Kush.
- (ii) Howsoever big the proposed empire, no social, economic or political stability, much less progress, will be possible

unless the enlargement of territory is accompanied by the prevalence of law and order. Short-range and long-range measures will have to be devised to deflect people from their favourite pastime of law-breaking. The contrast with the lawlessness of the preceding regime will automatically go in favour of the new regime. People will veer around their new ruler and hail him as their saviour.

- (iii) Law and order will prevail provided all citizens carry with them the feeling that justice will be available to them without discrimination of any kind and no high-handedness by big landlords, and civil or military bureaucracy, will go unnoticed by the highest authority. Quickly administered justice is the cheapest and the most effective social tranquilizer, but few persons like the penal part of justice. Therefore, the mistake of equating justice with punishment will have to be avoided. Kindness and forgiveness have been found to bring surer and higher dividends than penal action. There is no reason, then, why these two effective instruments of justice should not be given wider official recognition.
- (iv) Vengeance breeds vengeance and gives birth to an epidemic of hatred, tension, and violence. The quest for absolute power over the region is going to end in deposing of a number of potentates and blood will have to be shed to overcome their resistance. Will the royal hold over the levers of power be strengthened if vengeance is unleashed and humiliation heaped on the vanquished and the deprived? Most probably, not. On the other hand the co-operation and confidence of the deposed potentates and their people will have to be won by rehabilitating them properly.
- (v) No State can do without sporting two faces : a benevolent face, generally reserved for the State's own people and a malevolent one for external aggressors. With this simple formula as the guiding star of the government, the loyalty,

goodwill and co-operation of the State subjects, who are in themselves strong deterrants for foreign aggressors, may be presumed.

- (vi) In order to avoid unnecessary tensions, all subjects of the State, irrespective of their castes, creeds or professions, will be treated at par with co-religionists of the royalty. Would it also mean reintroduction of Akbar's policy of having a multi-religious harem ? Most probably, yes. At any rate, one thing is certain that the machinery of the State and all its functionaries shall have to be strictly impartial.
- (vii) Work shall have to be provided to the people, besides providing them with a common purpose that would inspire them to march in step with the government. The programme of conquests should open an immediate vista of increased work and freedom from foreign yoke. It should provide the people with a common incentive.
- (viii) Ancient wisdom of our country has been proclaiming from house-tops that in the matters of State, it is always the apex that determines the base : "*yathā rājā tathā prajā*." It has been appropriately remarked that if the king plucks one unauthorized apple from somebody's garden, his troops will certainly uproot all the fruit trees of that garden. It only means that apart from the impersonal policies of the government, the ruler has to be very careful about his personal conduct too.
- (ix) The temptation to plant apples of discord among the State's own people shall have to be desisted because almost always embarking upon this policy amounts to a confessional declaration that the writ of administration has ceased to operate on the administered people. God willing, this contingency is not going to arise in the new State. The slogan of the proposed State shall be "unite and rule" and not "divide and rule".
- (x) Just as orders are issued to be obeyed, promises by the government have also to be made with the full intention of fulfilling them. Empty promises may provide an

immediate escape route, but in the long run, they prove fatal to the government's credibility.

I hope the scholars will agree that the policies and actions of the Maharaja that contributed substantially towards the formation and consolidation of his empire may be traced to these and other such assumptions on his part. That these assumptions, when translated into practice, worked effectively is now a fact of history and this fact prompts me to believe that some of these postulates have not lost their relevance even today. For example, if a person with no formal education and with not a very royal physical exterior, could achieve near-success in uniting the Punjabi people, who were, only shortly before him, divided into mutually-opposing camps of Mussalmans on the one side and Hindus and Sikhs on the other, there is no reason why those, who have had the benefit of the best educational and administrative training in India or abroad, should fail to bring about unity among Hindus and Sikhs of the Punjab, (or for that matter all communities in India) who have a long history of common sufferings and struggles. There should be no room for doubt in anybody's mind, and I, for one, have absolutely none that, if the disease of communalism is rampant in modern India's social base, certainly many among those who comprise our political apex need immediate mental hospitalization. If violence is being increasingly resorted to by the younger generation for achieving redressal of their grievances or because they do not have any useful and remunerative work to do, it is time for the highest authorities of the country to redefine and restructure their socio-economic and political priorities. If peace is eluding the custodians of law and order in the Punjab, they should immediately join their wise and hoary heads to find out if the policy of *divide et impera* or resort to third degree methods of physical and mental torture are, in any measure, responsible for it.

The Maharaja, according to historians, never awarded capital punishment to anybody to instill terror in the minds of insurgents or even dangerous criminals. The moot point that arises in my mind and which experienced administrators have to answer is : If it was possible

for a ruler of the nineteenth century to run his State without using undue violence on his people, can a democratic country, such as India, be not run today on the same lines ? True, my experience of administration is confined to a few educational institutions only, but it was sufficient to make me realize that even the most intractable age-group among the youth responds favourably to sympathy, understanding, love, and fair play. Mr Waheeduddin, the author of *The Real Ranjit Singh*, has given photostat copies of the Maharaja's orders authorizing Faqir Nuruddin and Sardar Amar Singh, the then custodians of law and order in Lahore, that any inappropriate order issued by him must be brought to his notice for necessary amendment. "This was," according to Dr. Ganda Singh, "perhaps the only order of its kind in the history of the world, issued by a king authorizing subordinate officers of the State to withhold an order issued by the king himself."¹ Even a cursory glance through the orders of the Maharaja shows how honestly serious he was to see his postulates on the art of successful governance translated into action, otherwise, how could one explain the contents of such orders as the following, addressed to a couple of the highest military authorities of his empire :

- (i) Order dated Lahore, 21 December, 1833, addressed to S. Tej Singh :
 ...The Kampu-i-Mualla and the regiments should encamp on the ground of Mian Mir Sahib and a report sent accordingly. *En-route, the protection of crops, wooden equipment of the wells and the belongings of the poor is your responsibility. None should suffer hardship*² of any kind.³
- (ii) Order dated Lahore, 31 December, 1833, addressed to S. Tej Singh :
 The women named Wanti and Bhagi have been detained by commandant Sheo Prasad. *You should look into the matter and get them released if they are innocent.*⁴

1. *The Sikh Review*, February 1988, Kolkata, p. 25.

2. Italics in this paper have been done by the author.

3. Grewal, J.S. & Banga, Indu (ed.), *Civil and Military Affairs of Maharaja Ranjit Singh*, 1987, Amritsar, G.N.D. University, p. 10.

4. *Ibid.*, p. 108.

- (iii) Order dated Lahore, 11 January, 1834, addressed to S. Tej Singh :

It has come to His Majesty's notice that one member of a marriage party has been murdered. Apparently, this has happened because of the proximity of the camp. *A strict injunction therefore should be sent to all commandants, Captains, and Colonels that in future they shall be held responsible for murder or any other misconduct on the part of their men and that the officers also shall become liable to punishment.* In this case too, you should make a thorough investigation and report.⁵

- (iv) Order dated Lahore 15 February, 1834, addressed to S. Tej Singh :

Arrange to send to His Majesty the undermentioned soldiers, who as reported by Diwan Singh, the agent of Raja Sangat Singh, have wrongly belaboured a Khatri and two *Zamindars* so that the truth of the matter could be ascertained...⁶

- (v) Order dated Lahore, 18 May 1834, addressed to Kanwar Kharak Singh and Others :

Misr Bindraban is sent to you as the *akhbār-nawīs* of the Camp. See that he sends the news of every unit. It is generally believed that whosoever received an *akhbār-nawīs* from His Majesty or from the English is afraid of him lest he should report adversely. Whenever an *akhbār-nawīs* comes to His Majesty, he is told to write according to his inclinations. *Only he who gives cause for adverse reporting should be afraid as for instance he who indulges in drinking day and night, who keeps dancing girls, who is indolent and lax, and who accepts bribes or perpetrates oppression.* He who by the Grace of Akal Purakh is free from such blemishes has to fear none. You should ensure that the news is sent to His Majesty every day...⁷

5. *Ibid.*, p. 109.

6. *Ibid.*, p. 112.

7. *Ibid.*, p. 144.

- (vi) Order dated Lahore, 30 June 1834, addressed to S. Tej Singh :
Collect Rs. 5000/- from Sardar Gurmukh Singh Lamma and send him under escort to His Majesty alongwith Raja Fazl Dad Khan of Domelian. You should send a report on the persons responsible for setting the town on fire. *Bring with you a separate report on every person who evaded action and indulged in plundering the property of the residents of Domelian. Take care that none of your functionaries is bribed to give wrong information.* Send a list of horsemen under each of the Sardars who joined S. Gurmukh Singh Lamma...⁸
- (vii) Order dated Lahore, 2 July 1834, addressed to S. Tej Singh :
The dispute over *jāgirs* between Sardar Gurmukh Singh and Raja Fazl Dad Khan of Domelian has been settled by Sardar Gujjar Singh and Bhayya Ram Singh. *You should make a thorough enquiry to ascertain who was the aggressor, you are adjured in the name of Srī Granth Sāhib Jī and the salt of His Majesty that you should not be partial to any side.* Send a full report about both the sides.⁹
- (viii) Order dated Amritsar, 29 September 1834, addressed to S. Tej Singh :
You should report whether or not you have persuaded the gunner of the *derāh* of commandant Sewa Singh to pay 25 rupees to the cobbler and obtain from the latter the deed of conciliation. If you have, the gunner can be released and re-employed. Otherwise, he is to be dismissed.¹⁰
- (ix) Order dated Amritsar, 4 October 1834, addressed to S. Tej Singh :
Eight robbers and thieves whose names are given below are being sent to you. Send them back to His Majesty together with the reliable sureties but only after they have agreed

8. *Ibid.*, p. 158.

9. *Ibid.*, p. 158.

10. *Ibid.*, p. 180.

to join the infantry or the cavalry and also to pay 650 rupees as fine...¹¹

- (x) Order dated Sohian, 13 October 1834, addressed to S. Tej Singh :

Tomorrow you should march towards Derā Sāhib with all your battalions—the artillery of Colonel Shaikh Ilahi Bakhsh and the Akal Regiment to encamp between Derā Sāhib and Khotewāl, at a distance of 3 kos from Derā Sāhib. *You should post one commandant and a company in the rear to ensure protection of the people against any stragglers.*

*You must ensure that while on march, no one from any unit of the army does any damage to the sugarcane fields and the wooden wheels of wells or oppresses people in any way.*¹²

These orders picked at random from *Civil and Military Affairs of Maharaja Ranjit Singh* are, as they say in Panjabi, in the nature of “a single grain from the granary”. The learned scholars will agree with me that there is still much scope to learn from the School of Maharaja’s Experience. I admit that I have had no formal training in any reputed school in history, but I do not feel like being apologetic when I assert that it is the job of intellectuals, especially the ones who occupy University chairs, to help the people and the administration of the State by drawing lessons for them from our history. Like ‘Applied Science’, ‘Applied History’, it may not be placed by scholars at the same pedestal as ‘Pure History’, but it is the crying need of the hour and has to be taken up in all seriousness. More than any other group of historical workers, Ranjitologists should come forward to work primarily in such areas of research, as have utilitarian application also, for our political apex and social base.

11. *Ibid.*, p. 182.

12. *Ibid.*, p. 184.

The Deviational Tendency of Sikh Missions*

No documented history of the expansion of Sikh religion is available. It is, therefore, not quite easy to identify all the factors that were responsible for attracting large bodies of people to the Sikh fold. Competent scholars, however, refer us to such factors as the personal attention of the Ten Gurus, the unwavering faith of the early Sikhs, the pervading decadence of the earlier religious disciplines, the non-complicated theology and socio-political relevance of the Sikh faith, the heroic response of the Sikh masses to religio-political persecutions, the tribe-clan-caste foundation of the medieval Punjabi society, and the emergence of Sikhs as the rulers of the whole of north-western India. It may be these and many more factors but two factors, which are known to have contributed tremendously towards the spread of some world religions, are conspicuous by their absence in the history of Sikh religion, namely, conversion by force, and the establishment of a Central Church like the one that developed under the Pope in Christianity.

These two factors, though important for the consequences that arose out of them, have generally gone unheeded in case of Sikhs. For instance, the antipathy of the Sikh psyche towards hierarchical church has worked effectively against the emergence of a separate priestly class. Guru Gobind Singh himself is reported to have ordered the total liquidation of *masands*, the Cadre of Authorised Collectors-cum-Preachers, when it was brought to his notice that its members had acquired vested interests, characteristic of a privileged priestly

* Published in *Journal of Sikh Studies*, Feb. 1976, Amritsar, Department of Guru Nanak Studies, Guru Nanak Dev University, Vol. III, No. 1.

class. But religions do need some sort of missionary activities, both for internal consolidation and external expansion. With their aversion to use the sword for proselytisation and intolerance of any hierarchically organised church, the only chance for the Sikhs to proliferate lay in the emergence of voluntary bodies for missionary work. And that is what we see happening throughout the checkered course of Sikh history.

Missions did appear, but the growth of such missions, without any coalescing central authority did not prove to be an unmixed blessing. While these missions succeeded in carrying Guru Nanak's name to distant nooks and corners of India, and as far away as Petersburg in the early nineteenth century, the responsibility for giving severe twists to the essentials of Sikhism also rests squarely on their shoulders. In fact, if one were to prepare a curvilinear map, depicting the rise and fall of some notable Sikh missionary organisations, one would be surprised at the similarities in their careers. In each case, enthusiastic individuals, convinced of the emancipatory validity of Sikh faith, would sally out of their homes with the intention of sharing their faith with others. Then, they or their successors establish religious centres and knit themselves into a loose organisation. With the passage of time, the fire of faith subsides and their religiosity begins to find expression in such inane practices as the celebration of the Sun's entry into a new sign of the *Zodiac*, the ultra-strict observance of rituals, the sale of talismans as life-saving gadgets, and acquisition of landed property. In the ultimate phase, the gap between the main body of the Sikhs and the propertied missions widens, resulting in the disarray and extinction of the weaker missions and complete severance of all connecting links in the case of bigger ones. Such has been the history of Udāsīs, the oldest and the biggest mission, founded by Baba Siri Chand, the older of the two sons of Guru Nanak. More often than not, the story repeats itself with slight variations in the case of most of the other missions. The Mīnās, the Dhīrmaliās, the Rām Rayyās, the Suthrā-Shāhīs, the Diwānās, the Mehmā-Shāhīs, and the Gulābdāsīs, all began their careers with Guru Nanak's name on their lips but have

since either disappeared completely on account of their inability to keep pace with the parent body or have openly parted company. The Nirmalās, the Sewā Pañthis, the Nirankāris (of Baba Dayal), and the Nāmdhāris still deem themselves to be Sikhs, though their missionary activities are confined to recruiting followers for their own denominations. In any case, the tendency to assert their separate identity is unmistakable.

This deviatinal tendency of the Sikh missions calls for a review of Sikh policy vis-a-vis their missionary work, especially when the factors that contributed to the expansion of Sikhism during its earlier phases, either do not now exist at all or do so only scarcely.

As any serious attempt at reviewing a given stand will invariably slip from the 'how' to the 'why' of it, the Sikhs are sure to face the inconvenient question: Does Sikhism possess the requisite philosophical infrastructure to absorb the violent technological, political, socio-economic, and doctrinal shocks that are being received by it these days? Undoubtedly, Sikh answers to such questions will vary in details but, by and large, they are likely to be in the affirmative and even though one may base one's observations on a realistic, rather than a normative plane, the periodic displays of the community's spiritual and social vitality, as seen, for example, in their arduous struggle for liberation of their places of worship, and the continual emergence of high quality Guru-oriented, God-attuned servants of the people, tracing the whole build-up of their beauteous personalities directly to *gurbāṇī*, the Guru's word, are valid enough proofs in favour of the Sikh averment of their continued relevance. At socio-philosophical level, the Sikh dreams of producing a coalesced single-class society with equal rights for all human beings, irrespective of their positions in life, still remains a desideratum. Presuming then that the promoters of Sikh ideas do not have to fight a lost case, what are the followers of Guru Nanak to do to save their missions from going berserk?

It is a real big poser for the live Sikh community as a whole. Our purpose will be served if the community activates its think-tank and chalks out its present and future institutional programme, but it may be worthwhile to have some clear starting points.

Enough authoritative literature is not available on any aspect of Sikh religion, philosophy, history, etc. The bitter fact is that neither the members of the main body of the Sikhs nor the splinters that emanated from it were able to produce even one standard text book that could form the starting point for the teachers and the taught at their educational centres. Guru Nanak had shown in his brilliant *Sidh Gost* how his cardinal philosophical postulators could be identified and defined in minute detail when he was confronted by Sidh scholars. Subsequently, no Sikh stalwart appeared on the intellectual scene to carry forward and strengthen the Guru's example. All that the Sikh community could boast of is Bhai Gurdas but who can deny that he was neither Shankaracharya nor Imam Alghazzali in intellectual prowess. Leave alone the text books, no translation of *Gurū Granth Sāhib* itself has been attempted in most of the major languages of the world. Nearer home, it remains a sealed book for readers of almost all Indian languages. It has not yet been properly edited with definitive collations, notes and annotations in any language. Religion may be a matter of faith, but a faith which fails to enlist the support of reason, withers prematurely. That is why every religion throws up its own philosophers who seek to justify it, resolve its apparent contradictions, and establish its contemporary relevance. An authoritative exposition of a text, a lucid presentation of a thesis, or a brilliant interpretation of a religious ritual symbol has the potential of moulding the thinking of people of generations. The Sikhs, in general (including their professional preachers), and the non-Sikh students of Sikhism, in particular, feel greatly handicapped at the non-availability of interpretative literature of high quality. Once a religious missionary working for a big Sikh organisation, related to the writer, pointed out how intensely he felt the lack of guiding literature when, in the field, he had to face questions such as the following :

Is Sikhism a medieval amalgam of Hinduism and Islam ? Is it a protestant or militant limb of Hinduism ? Or, is it an independent religion in its own right ? Does Sikhism believe in communion with God ? If so, is the Guru an indispensable

intermediary ? Is *Gurū Granth Sāhib* an end in itself or a pointer towards the end and is the observance of prescribed religious symbols a must for achieving that end ? What exactly is the purpose of life and how is it to be achieved ? What is *Nām* ? If it is believed that there has been evolution in Sikh ideology, from Guru Nanak to Guru Gobind Singh, will it be fair to presume that the same process has ceased to operate in post-Guru Gobind Singh period ? Have the Bhagats, Sheikh Farid, Satta and Balwand, Sundar and Bhatts, whose compositions are included in *Gurū Granth Sāhib*, the same spiritual status as the Gurus ?

These are only a few questions out of scores of others which intelligent inquirers have been asking and shall continue to ask and to which each Sikh, more so a missionary, is expected to give convincing replies though most of them fail to do that for lack of training, and because no satisfactory literature is available. Under the circumstances, long-range steps may have to be taken to help young scholars and writers grow into specialists.

There is another point which deserves attention. Even a superficial study of *Gurū Granth Sāhib* makes it clear that membership of Sikh religion presupposes a certain minimum standard of spiritual and intellectual attainment. According to the Guru, each individual being 'Effulgent Divinity incarnate', it is expected of each Sikh to be a self-reliant, discriminating, responsible, and productive member of society. A random reference to the lives of Gurus shows how passionately they wanted to instil self-confidence in each one of their followers. When Satta and Balwand, the Guru's musicians decided, mistakenly, to non-cooperate, Guru Arjan at once advised his followers to try their own hands at the complicated musical instruments and, we are told, that they succeeded in striking heavenly music ! The touch of the child-Guru Harkrishan is reported to have converted a grass-cutter into an eloquent poet ! Guru Gobind Singh scattered handfuls of reed-pens all around Talwandi Sabo, his temporary rural headquarter, hopefully predicting that writers would soon arise to wield them. The inner message in each story is quite evident and the ease with which Sikhs

have acclimatized themselves in all climes shows that the message has not been lost on them. While the Gurus staunchly believed in *Saṅgat*, the united strength of individuals, they took special care to impress upon their followers that, life-force in each human form being the same, every individual was capable of reaching the top. Thus, it should not be difficult to discover the connecting link between the abolition of the Cadre of Professional Missionaries and the investiture, by Guru Gobind Singh, of the Sacred Book and *Panth*, the Corporate Body of the Sikhs, with Guruship. The Sikh tradition interprets this act of Guru Gobind Singh as the completion of the probationary period of the Sikh community. Henceforth, it could be depended upon to stand independently on its own legs, under all conditions. Understandably, it should also mean that each Sikh is to serve as a carrier of his faith, without the help of a proxy. It is entirely up to him to do it through word of mouth or through pen, but he will have to remember that example has been and will always be considered better than precept. If this expectation of the Guru about the exemplary conduct of his Sikhs is found much too exacting now and professional preachers have, perforce, to be depended upon for all types of missionary work, then the Sikhs may have to devise a Central Authority, the like of which has never existed in their history.

Kīrtan and the Sikhs*

According to the Sikh Scripture, *Kīrtan* (*gurbāṇī* or the authorised *bāṇīs* sung devotionally in prescribed *rāgas*, preferably to the accompaniment of instrumental music), cleanses the mind of all sensual impurities (pp 289; 979; 1174 of *Srī Gurū Granth Sāhib*), liberates man from the yoke of time and death (867), attracts divine pleasure (818), and leads him to emancipation (297; 747). It is conceived as an effective agency for stopping the cycle of rebirths (624). Often it is credited with the power of liquidating disease, sorrow and suffering (213; 1085) and bringing about perfect peace of mind and bliss (178; 926; 962). Thus, it is not only an effective psycho-somatic tranquilizer (1000) but also a rectifier of para-psychic and metaphysical disorders (178). Further, in the hands of Guru Nanak and his spiritual successors, *Kīrtan* became a means of strengthening the bonds that brought members of the rising Sikh Brotherhood closer to one another. Whether members of the *Saṅgat*, the Sikh congregation were active participants in the *Kīrtan* or sat through the session as silent listeners always resulted in inculcating strong emotional rapport among them. In a country where caste considerations went to the extent of declaring human beings as untouchable, *Kīrtan* served as a social coalescer also. Incidentally, it provided aesthetic fare too.

In view of the importance attached to *Kīrtan*, the reasons that must have prompted Guru Arjan, the compiler of the *Gurū Granth*, to chapterise the sacred work on the basis of *rāgas* and not on the basis of authorship or chronology, should not be difficult to seek. The practice of day and night singing of devotional hymns in

* First Published in *Journal of Sikh Studies*, August, 1976, Vol. III, No. 2.

Harimandir Sahib (Golden Temple, Amritsar), the most sacred of Sikh shrines, is as old as the shrine itself and is a good pointer to the place which devotional singing occupies in Sikh religion. There is hardly an occasion in a Sikh household, ranging from birth and marriage to death, which is not solemnized with *Kīrtan*. The *bhāī* or priest of even a small rural *gurdwārā* (Sikh Temple) is expected to be conversant with *Kīrtan* so that he may sing at least *Āsā Dī Vār* as part of the daily morning service.

Kīrtan being so ubiquitous in Sikh Society, normally, one would expect the emergence of a separate Sikh School in the long history of Indian music. It would also be natural to expect the availability of a large number of professionally competent *Kīrtanīās*. Further, the standard of musical knowledge among Sikhs, in general, could be reasonably expected to be higher than among any other homogeneous religious group of Indian people. The present position, however, is likely to cause disillusionment. No standard text-book on Indian music refers even casually to a distinct Sikh style of singing, much less to the prevalence of a regular Sikh school. Expert *Kīrtanīās*, fully conversant with traditional Sikh modes of singing are rare, and so for the musical knowledge of Sikh masses, the less said the better. There was a time when Ethel Rosenthal, the author of *The Story of Indian Music and its Instruments* (1928), could speak of the notable quality of singers and instrumentalists of the Golden Temple, Amritsar, and of the *gurdwārā* at Nander (then in the state of Hyderabad). Dr. Rabindranath Tagore mentions the holy music in his *Reminiscences* thus :

...the Golden Temple of Amritsar comes back to me like a dream... There the sacred chanting resounds continually. My father seated amidst the throng of worshippers, would sometimes add his voice to the hymn of praise... One day my father invited one of the chanting choirs to our place and got him to sing us some of their sacred songs...

It was Bhai Sunder Singh of Chāwal Mandi, Amritsar, whose magnificent performance, inside the *sanctum sanctorum*, enthralled this eminent connoisseur of music, Dr. Tagore's father. Ethel was a

foreigner, Tagore was a Bengali, and Sadhu Vaswani hailed from Sind, but the hypnosis of Sikh *Kīrtan* over all of them was equally effective. On enquiry, a working *rāgī* of Golden Temple, who preferred to remain incognito, so told the writer :

At that time, the appointing authorities of the Golden Temple knew their job fully well; they could differentiate between the appropriate and the inappropriate employment of grace-notes, inflections, curves or shading of tones by the *rāgīs*. Members of the listening public were also so well informed that many a time the lapses of erring *rāgīs* were pointed out by the *granthīs* in attendance or even by a random pilgrim.

The respondent bewailed the general fall in the professional standards of even *hazūri rāgīs*. If it is believed that the injunctions about the spiritual efficacy of *Kīrtan* still hold good, there is every reason why its present state should disturb the minds of those who are interested in the preservation and continuation of Sikh cultural values and institutions.

Concern about the lack of trained and qualified personnel, non-availability of literature and non-existence of good professional institutions is understandable, but a more disturbing feature of the situation is the absence of consciousness about what we are lacking. The inculcation of this consciousness must form the agenda of a separate, over-all programme to raise the cultural standard of the whole community. Meanwhile, the friends of Sikhs need to concentrate on the establishment of a Central Institute of Sikh Music so that it may bring together living maestros, work as clearing house for the dissemination of authentic knowledge about music in general and *Kīrtan* in particular, and produce trained practitioners. The writer is reminded of how when he was asked by Sardar Gurnam Singh, the late Chief Minister of Punjab, to provide a list of projects worthy of being taken in hand to commemorate the quincentenary of Guru Nanak, he placed the idea of an Institute of Sikh Music at the top. As explained to the late Chief Minister, rehabilitation of *Kīrtan* and promotion of research in Sikh music were to be the twin aims of the proposed Institute. Any inquisitive person who goes

through the *Gurū Granth* or listens to Sikh *Kīrtan*, may ask the Sikh musicologists such questions as the following and feel frustrated at the blank expression on the faces of his respondents, although there is hardly a question which a serious academician should not be able to answer satisfactorily :

Why have none of the authors, included in the *Gurū Granth*, made use of the *Mālkauns rāgas* even once ? Why do *Hindol* and *Dīpak* occur only in combination with *Basānt* and *Gaurī*, respectively, and independently ? Is *Gauṇḍ* of the *Gurū Granth* and *Gaur* of the classical systems one and the same *rāga* ? Does the Granthian system of *rāga* follow any of the classical *rāga*-systems, partially or wholly ? If not, was the *rāga*-system of the *Gurū Granth* the result of a meticulously planned effort ? If so, what were the compelling reasons for such a departure ? Is the departure from prescribed text books based on sound principles ? Who was responsible for the initial departure from classical norms ? As the *rāga*-system of the *Gurū Granth* stands today, is it possible to enumerate the points of departure ? Why was *Srī* (*Shrī*), an evening *rāga* given precedence over all the other *rāgas* and why was *Prabhātī*, a morning *rāga*, relegated to the last position, in the *Granth* compiled by Guru Arjan Dev ? Is there any special reason why *Gaurī* *rāga* was so extensively cross-fertilized with other *rāgas* ? What does *ghar(u)* stand for ? (In this connection, it may be interesting to know that the late Dr. Balbir Singh, who learnt classical music simply in order to understand the exact import of *ghar(u)* told the writer once, that his life-long research to understand the exact musical connotation of *ghar(u)* had trailed off into failure). Does the Granthian musical system betray any traces of Karnataka influence ? Is the popular medieval movement for cultural integration, that gave birth to a number of composite *rāgas* including the Indo-Iranian ones, reflected in the *Granth* ? Did Mardana or Satta or Balwand, *Kirtanīās* of the Gurus, sing *gurbānī* in the *qawwālī* style, sans its clappings, as some of their great grand-children of the 19th-20th centuries, such as Bhai Sain Ditta and Bhai Chand, exhibited in their performances within the sacred precincts of Harimandir Sahib ? Had Chishtis, with whom

Guru Nanak developed very friendly relations, anything to do with the style of our *Kīrtan* ? Were there any prescribed *rītis* according to which the *shabads* included under different *rāgas* in the *Gurū Granth*, were required to be sung ?

These are some of the questions of a layman. Other basic questions of an advanced technical nature are sure to crop up when scholars take to the study of Granthian musical scheme in a planned way. It is our firm belief that the establishment of a Higher Centre for Teaching and Research in Sikh Music, staffed with properly qualified and highly-paid specialists, will bring about the required efflorescence of the true Sikh *Kīrtan* style of music. God alone knows whether the realisation of this dream of a big teaching-cum-research institute will be a near or a distant possibility, but pending its establishment, there is a strong case for knowledgeable individuals to take up the challenge, on their own, without waiting for any external aid. The major reason is the fear that the fast diminishing cadre of the practitioners of the old art, who may still be preserving the purity of tradition, may soon fade out of existence. There is so much scope of work in this field that the labour of every researcher is sure to be amply rewarded. For instance, so far, nobody has cared to collect literary and technical evidence relating to the musical scene of the Guru Nanak-Guru Arjan period, which is, indeed, extremely fascinating from our point of view. We find such stalwarts of the world of music appearing on the stage as Sheikh Ghuran (of the Khusrau School), Mian Taha, Nurud-Din, Sūrdās (whom Abul Fazl calls a *Kīrtanīā*), Haridas (whose original home was in Uchh, an ancient town of the Punjab), Purandhar Das, Tan Sain, Baiju Bawara, Masi Kharn, and Gopal. Raja Man Singh Tomar of Gwalior, the great patron of Hindustani music, ascended the throne in A.D. 1486, and breathed his last in 1516. Raja Krishnadeva Rai of Vijay Nagar, the great patron of Karnataka music, died in A.D. 1530. Other patrons of music, such as Hussain Shah Sharqi of Jaunpur and Mohammad 'Adil Shah' Adli also flourished in the same period. Chaitanya, the great Bengali saint, who was very fond of *Kīrtan*, was a contemporary of Guru Nanak Dev. Important text books, namely, *Sangeet*

Sūryodaya of Lakshami Narayana, *Siddhant Padas* and *Keli Mal* of Hari Das (incidentally, he talks of *rabāb*, the favourite stringed instrument of Guru Nanak), *Rāga Mālā*, *Rāga Manjarī* and *Khaṭa rāga* of Pundrik, *rāga Vibodha* of Som Nath, *Ras Kaumudī* of Shrikantha and *Rāga Sagara*, etc., were also produced during the same period. Contemporary or near-contemporary literature on music being available in such abundance, would a researcher wish to place Sikh music in its proper historical perspective ?

There is another context in which problems relating to the genesis and growth of Sikh music may be studied with profit, namely, the religious assumptions of the prevalent classical systems of music, to which the eminent musicologist of India, Dr. Brihaspati once drew the writer's attention : We know that each *rāga* has a presiding deity. Musical systems are, therefore, fraught with doctrinal implications because they presuppose belief in multiple corporeal gods. To quote one instance, the Vaishnavites had devised eight *ārtīs* to celebrate the advent of each three-hourly section of the diurnal and nocturnal span of 24 hours. *Maṅgala ārtī* coincided with the waking time of the idol-god; *bhog ārtī* with the breakfast time, and so on. *Prabhāṭī* was their morning *rāga* and *Shrī* (*Srī* of *Gurū Granth Sāhib*) their late evening *rāga*. The placement of *Srī* at the beginning and *Prabhāṭī* at end in the first copy of *Granth*, according to Dr. Brihaspati, is the wages that the great Guru Arjan had to pay to save his doctrinal territory from being stormed by the Vaishnavites. Had Guru Arjan placed the *rāgas* of his *Granth* according to the established sequence of any prevalent classical *rāga* system, the religious implications of the system would also have necessarily sneaked in.

There is still another context in which the whole rationale of the genesis of Sikh music could be relevantly explored. *Bhairava rāga* is believed, by some, to have been connected originally with the sentiments of terror, but now it is used to stimulate pathos. Jaya Deva employs *Srī rāga* to induce sentiments of joy and happiness but the present *Srī* does not serve that purpose. *Basant* used to be the *rāga* of frolicsome abandon, though now it produces pangs of separation. In view of this evolution, the question before us is whether the Granthian *rāgas* were intended to evoke the moods and sentiments

originally prescribed in the classical text books or those which had been modified by time ? It will be for expert musicologists to come up with a satisfactory answer to this query, but it is our belief that a proper understanding of the socio-cultural policies of the Gurus would be very helpful in realising the essential nature of Sikh music.

Bhai Gurdas, an early surveyor of Guru Nanak's philosophical and socio-cultural achievements, talks of the elevation brought about by the Guru in the status of the unprivileged and the down-trodden, thereby destroying the four-tier hierarchy of the caste system and forging a single-class egalitarian society. Commensurate with Guru Nanak's attitude of raising the status of the lowly was his adoption of the spoken language of the Punjab, although it had few previous occasions of serving as the medium of high literature. The author of *Dabistān-i-Mazāhib*, a contemporary of Bhai Gurdas, makes a special note of this bold linguistic choice of Guru Nanak. Similarly, Gurmukhī script, which is now even mistakenly regarded by some Indian scriptologists as a corrupt form of Devanāgarī script, was raised by him to the status of the only orthographic vehicle of the cultural revolution that was being ushered in by him. It is in this context that the use of music, by Guru Nanak and his successors, as a spiritual uplifter and as one of the effective media of mass communication, should be viewed. In the face of Guru Nanak's antipathy towards highbrow purism, as evidenced by his treatment of diction, language, script, metrical system, verse forms, dress, eating customs, etc., one could almost anticipate his reaction towards the ornate, courtly *rāgas*, wherein the dexterous manipulation of melody and rhythm had become an end in itself. Voice-culture was not an end for the Guru; *rāga* was for him, an artistic medium to be used to explore uncharted areas of spiritual awareness. According to the text-books, *rāga* "colours the mind with passionate emotive patterns" (*ranjayati iti rāga*), but the Guru wanted *rāga* to be used for mental, moral and spiritual upliftment of the people and not only for "colouring of their minds". How could he have any aversion towards the melodious patterns and styles and tunes that the people's genius had created ?

We have not inherited any notational recording of the Guru's musical system but there is a brave effort on the part of the compiler of the *original Granth* at being unambiguous in his instructions relating to the *rāga*, *ghar(u)*, etc., in which each composition is to be sung. In the case of some *Vārs*, tunes of specific popular folk-ballads were prescribed as guiding models. The accommodation of folk music in the Sikh Scripture is in line with the sympathetic attitude of the Gurus towards many other aspects of folk culture. This would also raise the probability of Gurus as having adopted some *rāgas* current among the people, though not popular with the classicists, and for all that we know, *Tukhāri*, and *Mājh* may be two such. It will not be surprising if researchers come up with the finding that the *rāga* system, adumbrated in *Gurū Granth Sāhib*, represents a massive attempt on the part of the Gurus at owning, elevating, and classicising a range of musical patterns whose immediate roots lay in the essentially composite folk culture of the period and not in the courtly, classical culture.

The bias for composite and folk music notwithstanding, there is no mistaking the fact that strict observance of the intended musical score was expected by the Gurus. Unfortunately, as we have already explained, the violation of these instructions is common and the toleration of this violation is universal, and the basis of this sacrilege is mostly ignorance, though, at times, it is the result of pondering to the popular taste which feeds itself exclusively on tunes made current by Hindustani films. This, in fact, is an independent problem and sooner, than later, responsible and representative Sikh bodies have to address themselves to the task of formulating a consistent policy towards subjecting *gurbānī* to new musical experiments, but this problem should in no case be mixed up with the promiscuity that characterises the contemporary practice of *gurmāt saṅgīt*.

In fact, listening to some of the *Kīrtan* music, as performed in the most sacred places of Sikh worship today, any knowledgeable person with a sensitive ear would be reminded of the mythological story in which Vishnu introduces to Narada, *rāgas* and *rāginīs*, as human beings, with limbs all mutilated. A *rāga* with mutilated limbs cannot be expected to add wings to poesy. *Rāga* was meant by the

Gurus to be an aesthetic vehicle which would carry the verbal message to the remotest recesses of the mind, and release responses which usually remain untouched even by poetical approaches. Rather than experiencing relaxation of tension and aesthetic thrill, inept *Kirtan* grates on one's ears, sits uneasily on the nerves of the listeners, and makes people sick. While it is the writer's fear that a neglectful attitude towards the theory and practice of the prescribed *Kirtan* form of music may soon result in the total loss of an art which was meant to be an essential part of the Sikh people's aesthetic *weltanschauung*, it is his hope that the establishment of a high-level Institute of Sikh Music may yet avert the impending tragedy.

Sikhism and National Integration*

Integration of different strands of social fabric was and still remains a major concern of the Sikh faith. The founder of Sikh faith, Guru Nanak, appears to have arrived at the conclusion quite early in his career that the segregatory instinct had become an in-built part of the Indian ethos and two important factors were contributing substantially towards the perpetuation of that state of affairs. These were : (a) the availability of religious validation to individual distinctions between man and man, on the basis of birth, and (b) absence of any meaningful dialogue and understanding between different faiths.

A Historical Note

From Guru Nanak to Guru Gobind Singh, the tenth and the last Guru, concrete steps were constantly undertaken to expose and counter the elitist claim that caste-system, the progenitor of untouchability, was a divinely-ordained dispensation. Simultaneously, several bridges of understanding were built to span the chasms that divided one religion from the other. During the process of breaking the stranglehold of *varṇāshramadharama* and developing accommodative consideration towards other religions, Sikhism acquired certain features which seem to be unique not only in the history of Indian Integration but also in the history of World Religions. I propose to focus on a few such features here, leaving the rest to be dealt with at the end of my paper :

* This paper was read and discussed in the International Conference on "Religion in National Integration" held in New Delhi from January 16 to 18, 1982. The conference was organised jointly by the Centre for the Study of World Religions, Bangalore and the Centre for Indian and Inter-religious Studies, Rome.

- a. All Sikhs' places of worship are required to make arrangements for free board and lodging for those who may care to avail of these facilities. It should be clear that non-consideration of caste, creed, colour, country, sex, or status in this programme was a direct attack on *varṇāśhramadharma*.
- b. The holiest of the holy Sikh shrines, the Harimandir of Amritsar, is provided with four doors, unlike the conventional one-door entry of the Hindu shrines. These doors symbolize free and unrestricted access of all castes and religions to the Sikh house of worship.
- c. The compiler of the holy book of the Sikhs, Guru Arjan, included in it, besides his own complete works and those of his four predecessor Gurus, the selected works of a number of well-known and not-so-well-known saints, some of whom belonged to the then untouchable castes. Among the included saints there were high caste Hindus and Muslims also. Every time, a Sikh bows his head before the Holy Book, he bows it not only before his Gurus but also before Kabīr, the weaver, Ravidas, the cobbler, Sadhnā, the butcher, and Farīd, the Chishti sufi.
- d. In 1699, Guru Gobind Singh introduced the baptismal ceremony among his Sikhs. It required each aspirant, present in the ceremonial session, to sip the steel-stirred and chant-charged water from the same bowl. The new recruits are told by the Master of the Ceremony that from that moment onwards, they have to forget all about their obligations to their previous castes, high or low, because they have become the sons and daughters of Guru Gobind Singh and Mātā Sahib Kaur.

Such are some of the unorthodox steps that the founders of Sikh faith took to smash the religion-backed, birth-based system of segregation and to make social integration a part of Sikh religious ethos.

Inter-religious Understanding and Toleration

I shall now take the other facet of integration, namely, inter-religious understanding and toleration. It may be noted that while Sikhism is intolerant towards a birth-based, multi-caste social set-up because it is violative of the unity and dignity of mankind, it is tolerant towards a multi-religious society because of its moral and integrative potentialities. While the former is wholly unacceptable, the evils of the latter are considered to be rectifiable through appeals to norms. "One who considers Hinduism and Islam to be equally valid will be able to solve many of his problems, but he who considers the other religions to be irreligious, will singe himself (in the fire of hatred)," says Guru Nanak in his *Vār of Rāg Mājh*. The following are some of the steps undertaken by the founding fathers of Sikhism to achieve inter-religious amity :

- a. All accounts of Guru Nanak, nearest to him in time, agree that the Guru went far and wide to meet the leaders of various religious denominations at their headquarters, exchanged views with them, held discussions on philosophical-cum-theological themes, preserved by him in certain cases in his compositions. Dialogues and discussion are the safety-valves of a multi-religious society and it is these that the founder of Sikhism often made use of, indicating that explorative understanding of the others' point of view should be the aim of comparative metaphysics, rather than scoring points over them.
- b. The first thing that Guru Nanak is reported to have done after his trance-tryst with God, was to express his utter dissatisfaction with the un-Hindu and un-Islamic lifestyles of his Hindu and Muslim contemporaries, respectively. His immediate reaction was not that of inviting them to join the faith which he was founding, but of advising them to become true, honest, and sincere members of their respective faiths. It is clear that this approach concedes redemptive validity to all faiths on the basis of their original normative claims, "Share the good qualities of others,

leaving alone their bad ones," recommends Guru Nanak in *Rāga Sūhī*. In *Rāga Gaurī*, he says, "(On the face of it), there are two highways—the Hindu and Muslim, but their Lord is the same." Guru Amar Das, Guru Nanak's second successor, goes a step further. "Grant me redemption, O Lord," says he, "(If not through the door that I have selected), through the door of your own choice." Guru Arjan puts forward the same idea in a different way: "Make it clear, O Nanak, that it is the Guru who removes the pall of falsehood and shows how Allah and Pārabrahma are the same" (*Rāga Rāmkalī*).

- c. It may also be relevant to refer to *Gurū Granth Sāhib* in this section of my paper because the compiler included in it the selected works of certain Hindu and Muslim saints who lived even prior to his birth. The Sikh scripture seems to be the only sacred book of a major religion of the world in which integrative impulse has gone to the extent of incorporating the devotional works of the writers of religions other than its own.
- d. Developing an attitude of respectful accommodation towards other religions may be very helpful to the principle of integration, but laying down one's own life for the worshipping rights of a religion other than one's own belongs to the category of a much higher plane of altruism, and this is what Guru Tegh Bahadur, the ninth Guru, did in 1675 in Delhi. "Nobody has ever equalled the action of Guru Tegh Bahadur," declares Guru Gobind Singh. This uniqueness lies in his martyrdom for the defence of the "sacred thread and the distinguishing mark on the forehead" of the Hindus. While Guru Nanak had urged Mussalmans to be good Mussalmans and those belonging to Hindu denominations to be true to their respective faiths and Guru Arjan Dev had made the hymns of saints belonging to other religions a part of his own hymnal, Guru Tegh Bahadur enlarged the area of integration by

offering his life for the freedom of others' conscience. Like peace, conscience is also indivisible and any danger to it from any quarter must become everybody's concern. That is what the Guru's action amounts to.

Such are some of the most unusual efforts made by the founders of Sikhism to create a climate of integration in a caste-and-religion torn society. It may be noted that I have not yet qualified integration with the adjective 'national'. I have done so deliberately, because Sikhism prefers to treat this problem at its most comprehensive human level. The rise of the concept of nation-countries as political units is a later phenomenon and has brought to the fore some new identity-problems which find occasional eruptive expression on the issues of nationality, language, etc. It is possible to work out the attitude of Sikhism towards such problems also on the basis of comments made by Guru Nanak and other Gurus in their compositions. For example, Guru Nanak chastises his people for being purblind towards the need of preserving the purity and identity of their language, their own culinary and sartorial styles, and their forms of address. He was a poet and loved the region of his birth, its people, and their culture with the inspired passion of a poet, but that did not stand in the way of his patriotism. Of all the medieval poets, it is he who takes the contemporary Pathan rulers to task for having lost the "gem" of a land, that is India, to Babar, "who came as the head of a party of sin from Kabul to secure the hand of the bride (India) by force."

Sikhism and Nationalism

There are people in India for whom the idea of "national integration" is synonymous with the idea of "one country, one nation, one language, and one culture," the last being a wishful euphemism for "one religion". The Sikh response to such a slogan of national integration will always be negative because at the back of this attractive slogan lies concealed the goal of uniformity, not unity; merger, not coalition; surrender of identity, not co-existence. Decimation of minority-opinion can never mean normalization of

social relations and is not in keeping with the Sikh concept of integration. The question is : Is it imperative for Indian people to develop total amnesia towards natural, distinct and historically-evolved nationalities, languages, religions, etc., in this sub-continent in order to inculcate in them a sense of common belongingness ? If history has any relevance, then the Sikh answer will be a plain "No" and five hundred years of Sikh history will confirm the rectitude of the Sikh stand that unity in diversity, not absolute conformity or uniformity should be the goal of all multi-racial, multi-national, multi-lingual, and multi-religious societies.

The Sikhs love their homeland, the Punjab, intensely, their attachment to Punjabi language is emotionally surcharged and their sacrifices for their religion are known all the world over. But all their fascination for their homeland, language or religion notwithstanding, the contribution of the small Sikh community to the liberation of India from the foreign yoke, in terms of hangings, life-imprisonments, fines, attachments of property, confiscations, and physical tortures undergone by its members far exceeds the percentage of other communities for the same punishments, even when the Sikh sacrifices during the pre-British period are not taken into account. I regard Sikhism as a standing tribute to the principle of integration; it is a living monument of cohesion; it is a model of large-hearted toleration. Had that not been so, the hagiographic stories depicting Guru Nanak's equal post-mortem acceptability among Hindus and Muslims (Hindus cremating one half of his flower-turned remains and Mussalmans burying the other half) could not have become popular. Even now Hindus and Mussalmans acknowledge him as their own. The story that Hazrat Mian Mir, a Muslim Sufi, laid the foundation-stone of the Golden Temple at Amritsar, is repeated with pride by Sikhs and should be sufficient to prove their bonafides for bringing about integration.

Allied Principles of Solidarity

I shall now draw attention to a few more principles of solidarity which we are advised to cherish in Sikhism :

- a. The abolition of the system of classifying society into a hierarchy of castes has to be done not as a merciful concession to the so-called untouchable or dispossessed classes by charitably-disposed privileged classes, but as a daring righteous action by people who have become inseparable limbs of the dispossessed. Guru Nanak says, "What have I to do with the high-caste people ? You may always find me mixing with the meanest among the lowest of the low castes."
- b. Introduction of a system in which socially useful physical labour becomes an inseparable part of everyone's life-style is recommended. According to Guru Nanak, "It is social service alone which can ensure a berth in God's Court." (*Srī Rāga*). The emphasis on social service is based on the belief that physical work for the common good is the best social leveller.
- c. Women constitute about half of Indian society, as of any other society in the world. Unless women are made its equal and respectable part, integration will remain an unrealized dream. I quote from Guru Nanak, "Why do you look down upon woman who has the honour of mothering even the highest among men ?...It is God alone whom she does not give birth" (*Rāga Āsā*).
- d. The genuineness of the leaders of all religions and, for that matter, of all organized bodies, should be judged by the extent to which they enthuse the people around them with the passion of making friends with all. "Ever since I came into contact with my Guru," says Guru Arjan, "all animosities have been washed out of my heart. Now nobody is an enemy or a stranger and my relations with everyone have become cordial." (*Rāga Kānaṛā*).
- e. "The ruler must take a vow to be strictly fair and just towards his people" (Guru Nanak in *Vār Sāraṅg*). This is an essential pre-condition for the success of the policy of integration. Much friction between individuals and groups arises from the unequal treatment meted out to them by

the functionaries of the state. The state must not only be equi-distant or equi-near from all sections of society but be honestly and benignly just to all of them if it wants to further the cause of integration.

- f. Intensive campaigning has to be resorted to among the people at large to impress upon them their essential unity underlying their apparent diversity. This is how Guru Gobind Singh elaborates this point in his *Akāl Ustat* :

Let all human beings understand that they belong to the one and same caste...

The temple and the mosque are the same;

There is no basic difference between Hindu and Mussalman worship.

All mankind is one, though it gives the false impression of being many.

Even the differences between *devatās* and *adevas*, the *Yakshas* and the *Gandharvas*, the Hindus and the Mussalmans are the natural outcome of physical conditions of different countries.

Is everyone not endowed with similar sets of eyes and ears, a similarly-constituted physique made of a mixture of the same soil, air, fire, and water ?

The Hindu and the Muslim gods are the same;

The Hindu and the Muslim sacred texts give, in essence, the same message....

Before closing, I should like to say that like all wars and disputes, their resolutions are also born in the minds of men, and Sikhism lays great emphasis on the correct treatment of the maladies of mind, such as pride, prejudice, hatred, anger, and avarice which serve as stumbling blocks in the way of all integration, including national.

Multi-Cellular Concept of Community Development*

During a recent tour, which enabled me to meet people at close quarters in some of the major towns of the U.S.S.R., the U.S.A., the U.K., and France, I got an impression that interest in Sikh religion and history is now a global phenomenon. A large majority of foreign scholars, who have already had occasion to apply their minds to some aspect of Sikh studies, spoke warmly about the Sikh people and their faith but complained about the lack of knowledgeable men and source-material.

The Sikh settlers, almost all of them well-established in business, industry or professions and well-knit in spite of their *gurdwārā*-politics, were also sore that enough literature on Sikhism had not been made available by Sikh scholars of India, although some of these Sikh complainants seemed to be mentally and intellectually as alert and well-equipped as any of their counterparts in India.

Nearer home, whether in Bangalore or Baramula, Bhilai or Bhuntar, and Kolkata or Kanpur, I have often come across well-meaning Sikhs bemoaning the near-absence of satisfactory literature on Sikh theology, Sikh history, and Sikh sociology.

Such complaints, coming from non-Sikhs, especially foreigners interested in understanding the genesis and growth of Sikh phenomenon in India, may be understandable, but when these come from Sikhs themselves, and that too from persons who are themselves capable of producing such material or control the financial and institutional resources which can be easily pressed into service to

* First Published in *The Sikh Review*, March 1982, Kolkata, Vol. XXX No. 339.

cause the required material to be produced, an effort must be made to find out why a large majority of the present generation of Sikhs is seeking excuses for its cultural barrenness.

My explanation for this state of affairs may sound rather simplistic, even paradoxical and far-fetched, but I have a strong hunch that the achievement by the Sikhs of their constitutional right to administer their places of worship through an elected apex body, namely, the Shiromaṇī Gurdwārā Prabandhak Committee (S.G.P.C.), Amritsar, has something to do with it. The said right was achieved by the Sikh community after a bitter struggle with the government of the day and involved so much suffering to so many Sikhs that it succeeded in evoking the sympathy of almost every Sikh, whatever his physical distance from the actual scene of operation. When, ultimately, the S.G.P.C. came into being, it appeared to most of the Sikhs as if a golden dream had been realised. They developed a feeling of smugness because from then onwards they could look up to a body of their own creation for the fulfilment of most of the community's religious needs and ambitions.

Besides other contributory reasons, the creation of a Central Sikh Religious Authority also contributed to the atrophy of a large number of traditional centres which used to produce Sikh religious literature.

If the quantity of Sikh literature produced in the traditional centres of Sikh culture, namely, the *ḍerās* or Sikh monasteries, is compared with the literature produced at these very centres after the formation of the S.G.P.C., the writer's point of view may perhaps deserve some consideration by the well-wishers of Sikh community.

The failure of S.G.P.C. to outgrow its managerial and litigational involvements to fill adequately the literary and cultural vacuum caused partially, if not wholly, by the committee's own emergence as the apex body has induced the writer to suggest a way out of the present suicidal impasse. To me, it seems that the hope lies in generating a climate wherein any viable Sikh cell or nucleus, the local *saṅgat*, for example, or a body of like-minded persons, feels encouraged to undertake some useful project on behalf of the whole community.

It is presumed that all Sikhs would like to make available their scripture, *Ādi Srī Gurū Granth Sāhib*, in almost all the major languages of the world, although so far, their achievement does not go much farther than a few half-hearted attempts to reach the English-knowing readers. No translations have yet been made available in such major media of human communication as French, German, Spanish, Russian, Chinese, Japanese, Arabic, or Sawahili. In fact, translations are not available even in all Indian languages and the such ones as are available in Bangla, Telugu, Hindi, or Sindhi are not the result of direct effort by Sikh scholarship.

Some people may hold that this situation exists because the numerically small Sikh community does not have the financial or intellectual wherewithal for such tremendous undertakings, but anyone conversant with the Sikh habit of parting with money for community undertakings will hesitate to come to any such conclusion. Further, the illustrious galaxy of encyclopaedic Sikh minds, such as Bhai Santokh Singh, Pandit Tara Singh Narottam, Giani Gian Singh, Bhai Vir Singh, and Bhai Kahn Singh serves as an assurance that the community can rise to the occasion when faced with intellectual challenges.

It may not be out of place here to remind that it was one individual, Dr. William Carey of the English Baptist Mission, who got the holy Bible translated into 35 languages, including Chinese, against odds, most of which do not exist now for the Sikh people. *Qādiānīs*, like Sikhs, are a minority Community. Even in the Muslim State of Pakistan, they have been declared a non-Muslim minority Community, but it is highly rewarding to have a look at their achievement in translating the *Qurān* in different languages of the world.

It is natural for the following query to raise its head at this stage : If the Sikhs have the means as well as the brains, why don't we find any translations of the *Granth* in most of the languages of the world ? Because, I think, these were not on the priority list of the S.G.P.C. and none else thought of trespassing into the preserve of the prestigious body.

I am of the firm opinion that if a Foundation, formed by an opulent *saṅgat*, say of Delhi or New York or Toronto, undertakes the project of making available the holy *Granth* in one of the major European languages—German, for example, and pumps all its resources and energies towards the fulfilment of this one job, it should be able to achieve its objective without much difficulty. On the same pattern, if the *saṅgat* of Calcutta or Los Angeles or Yuba City or Vancouver takes up single-mindedly the work of the translation of the *Granth* into Spanish or Arabic or any other language, leaving all other activities to others, not many insurmountable difficulties are likely to stand in their way.

The conjoint mention of some towns with specific projects in the preceding paragraph is merely illustrative in nature. The thrust of my argument is that the local units should think concretely in terms of individual projects that may suit their financial and organizational capacities and then bend all their energies towards making that particular project a success.

At present, the whole energy of the Sikh people seems to be directed to the ceremonious and rather noisy celebrations of a few *gurpurbs* and towards putting up imposing piles of brick and mortar to serve as their places of congregational worship and common eating. Big projects, such as the translation of the *Gurū Granth Sāhib*, are not taken up because, as suggested earlier, these are regarded as the preserves of the S.G.P.C.

I wish to encourage the removal of any such conscious and unconscious psychological barrier, especially from the minds of Indian and foreign Sikh *saṅgats*, as are free from the legal constraints vis-a-vis the S.G.P.C. The removal of this imaginary barrier will make a huge difference in favour of the reactivation of long-range cultural activities.

It is hoped that many local Trusts or Foundations, with powers to co-opt or appoint local or foreign technical advisers will come into being. Procedural modalities can be easily worked out by these bodies to suit the requirements of their membership, their localities, and their projects. With the coming into being of project-and-result-

oriented bodies, the flow of finance towards less necessary and wasteful projects is expected to slow down steadily to the benefit of all concerned.

It may be clarified here that the writer's plea that the 'one-cell, one-project' scheme be given serious consideration by enlightened Sikh congregations all over the world, has not been conceived in order to negate the authority and influence of the S.G.P.C. It will, on the other hand, provide the Committee with immense opportunities to work as the community's highest planning and co-ordinating agency so that there is no duplication of *Panthic* effort. The display of initiative by the local Sikh bodies may also persuade the S.G.P.C. to take into its own hands what it has left so far to the good sense of others.

It may be helpful to the *saṅgats* if a few projects that may suit different budgets are suggested here. It is understood that the projects will not only raise the cultural status of the Sikh Community, but will also fulfil long standing expectations of the world community from the Sikh people. I, therefore, float the following ideas, in addition to the translation of *Gurū Granth Sāhib* in the major languages of the world, including those of India :

(a) An illustrated History of the Sikhs

Supposing there existed a 25-volume History of the Sikhs, with each volume covering about 1000 pages of documented material, including pictures, drawings, maps, graphs, etc., in a very artistic format, I am sure that no world-class library of any country will like to remain long without it. Will that not be an enviable achievement on the part of a minority community of the world ? And yet, this highly-desirable project remains a desideratum, because no central Sikh body has been able to find time to draw its master plan.

It is high time that an Indian or foreign *saṅgat* or a body cutting through national and international boundaries, comes forward to take this project in hand. All that the body to be formed for this project will need is the assistance of a high-level editorial board to work out the synopsis of each chapter of each volume, allot work

to specialists, and see the finally-edited manuscript through the press. Other details, minor or major, should pose no problems to the proposed Foundation if the financial implications have been properly worked out.

(b) Literature

The scope of the planned production of Sikh literature is immense, provided the sales counters can be set up in *gurdwārās* on the pattern suggested by me in Guru Nanak Dev University's *Journal of Sikh Studies*, Vol. V, No. 1 (February, 1978). In this case also, the emphasis should be on specialization. For example, one *saṅgat* may undertake the production of literature for Sikh children only; another may take up biographies of Sikh Soldiers; still others may take up one such subject as Sikh Saints, Sikh Martyrs, Sikh Writers, Sikh Scholars, Sikh Artists, Sikh Scientists, Sikh Inventors, Sikh Women, Sikh Social Workers, Sikh Tenets, Sikh Gurdwārās, Sikh Forts, Sikh Arms, Sikh Dresses, Sikh Manuscripts, Sikh Directories, etc.

(c) Literature for the Blind

Similarly, a *saṅgat* may decide to specialise only in the production of Sikh literature of all types in Braille script for the convenience of blind persons. Chief Khalsa Diwan, Amritsar for example, may utilize its resources for no other project but this one.

(d) Preservation of the *Rīts* of the *Rāgas* of *Gurū Granth*

As we all know, the bulk of Sikh scriptural hymnody is required to be sung in the prescribed musical modes. The efficacy of devotional music in inducing rarified religious experience is strongly advocated in the *Granth*. The Gurus had developed such a fine sensitivity for music that they could differentiate between the moods engendered by the slightest regulated variation within the ambit of the same mode. That is what the specification of the *ghar(u)* of the *rāga*, in which a particular hymn has to be performed, indicates. It

is evident that such high proficiency in the manipulation of vocal chords cannot be achieved easily, especially when the expert musician is required to go beyond the mere exhibition of technical skill or the inducement of sensual pleasure, to the regions of spiritual elevation. To meet this end, the Sikh and non-Sikh *kīrtanīās* had developed their own distinctive *rīts*, or styles of singing for the *rāgas* prescribed for the Granthic texts, but this tribe of the *kīrtanīās* is on the way out and there is every fear of the disappearance of authentic Sikh style of singing if steps to save it are not taken without loss of much time. The least that can be done is to locate the experts and prepare quality cassettes of the different *rīts*. The late Dr. Taran Singh of Punjabi University, Patiala had got prepared a few cassettes in which he was able to preserve the performances of some eminent Sikh *kīrtanīās*, some of whom are already dead, but this great work done by the learned professor seems to have been lost to the posterity for lack of proper preservation by its custodians. It is high time for an energetic Sikh *saṅgat* to specialise in recording and making available Sikh music in quality cassettes. Care will have to be taken to see that each cassette gives such clear explanations about the details of the following musical performance as may help even the uninitiated to catch not only the beauty and quality of the music but also the distinctive nuances that differentiate the Sikh styles from other classical styles. For the satisfactory execution of this important project the *Nāmdhārī Darbār* is perhaps the most qualified at present.

(e) Blue Prints for *Gurdwārā* Buildings

One of the *saṅgats* (why not Chandigarh in this case ?) may choose to specialise in the production and free supply of blue-prints for *gurdwārā* buildings, ranging from one-roomed tenements to multi-acre complexes. The artistically-satisfying fusion of modern architectural patterns with traditional Sikh buildings features by highly qualified architects will result in studding the skyline with eye-catching structures. Under this project, free consultation for any additions, alterations, or repairs to the old shrines of great historical

importance, such as the Harimandir, the Akāl Takht, Bābā Aṭal, etc., may also be made available.

(f) A Sikh Museum

The so-called Sikh Museum, now situated at the first floor of the porch of the main entrance to the Golden Temple complex at Amritsar, is not even a weak apology for a real museum. A Sikh Museum, as impressive as the museums in England, France, the U.S.A., and Russia may be tall talk today, but a delightful museum of smaller dimensions put up under the guidance of some qualified museumologist is a feasible project which an enterprising *saṅgat* may undertake.

(g) Greeting Cards

Another project is the large-scale production and distribution of attractive cards for happy and not-so-happy occasions. Based on Sikh themes and designed by artists of high calibre, the cards are likely to create their own market. The same concern may undertake the reproduction of selected paintings in the form of loose sheets and/or albums.

(h) Souvenirs

Way back, probably in 1963, going around the archaeological remains of Sunet, Sunetra of ancient Indian history, near the present campus of the Punjab Agricultural University, Ludhiana, in the company of the then Joint Director of Archaeology, Government of India, Dr. B. C. Chhabra, we stumbled upon a clay seal on which was inscribed in early Gupta script a formula which, in translation, would read "Enjoy and Give". This, according to Dr. Chhabra, must have been the motto of a shrine in Sunetra and, presumably, the coins bearing this motto were presented by the custodians of the shrine to the pilgrims as souvenirs.

During my visit to the Russian Orthodox Church complex at Zhagorsk, about 75 km. from Moscow, beautiful medallions, small

metallic mementoes and picture-cards and illustrated booklets were presented to me by the priests as souvenirs. The preservation of memories of one's visit to a particular place of historical interest through the acquisition of dainty souvenirs is a delectable habit and, if Dr. Chhabra is to be believed, of hoary origin also. But, surprisingly, this system has failed to find popular footing among the Sikh people. Not many varieties of Sikh souvenirs are available at Sikh shrines. If some *sangat*, say of Amritsar, were to specialise in producing and marketing quality Sikh Souvenirs, the enterprise is sure to be welcomed by the pilgrims and tourists alike.

(i) Prizes

At present, no institution grants recognition to the outstanding excellence of any creative, critical, or interpretative work on a Sikh theme by a Sikh or a non-Sikh artist or scholar by awarding handsome prizes. This idea may be picked up by a *sangat* or S.G.P.C. itself and an elaborate plan for its regular and regulated working may be drawn up. The prize may not be less than Rs. 50,000/- for a work of real merit.

(j) Homes for the Old

A philanthropic project of a category quite different in nature from the preceding ones, relates to the provision of board, lodging, medical aid, and loving care for the old and physically incapacitated workers who were once active in the Sikh cultural and political fields. Those who have witnessed the miserable last days of the late Giani Kartar Singh, once well known as the "brain" of the Akali Party, will readily agree that comfortable Homes for *Panthic* workers, artists, writers, etc., also need to be placed among the top priorities.

All the foregoing suggestions are intended to serve as seed ideas so that local Sikh *sangats* or bodies, all over the world, may embark on independent cultural adventures without waiting indefinitely for any institution at the apex to move first.

It may be argued on the basis of the working of the two Foundations which already operate under the names of Guru Nanak

and Guru Gobind Singh that the institution of any other similar body cannot be expected to yield strikingly different results. My answer to such prophets of gloom will be the stationary nature of the two Foundations is mainly due to their policy of diffused all-inclusiveness in their objectives and whenever that happens in the case of cultural organizations, the chances of achievement are sure to be dim. That is why I hold that if there is any possibility of retrieving the lost opportunities, it will have to be through severe delimitation of the area of activity by each of our religious and cultural cells, to achieve a single, well-defined and useful objective.

‘Houses of the Book’ as Book-Houses*

Gurdwārā, the Sikh place of worship, literally means the “House of the Guru”. As the Sikhs now accept the *Granth*, the Holy Book, as their Guru, *gurdwārā* may as well be translated as the “House of the Book”. A *gurdwārā* without the Book is unimaginable. It is invariably looked after by a paid or honorary *granthī*, the Keeper of the Book. With such book-centredness of the Sikhs and the availability of a *granthī* in each *gurdwārā*, it would be quite legitimate to expect that each Sikh place of worship should be found equipped with a library. Facts, however, belie any such expectation. There was a time when Sikh *sādhūs* belonging to the Udāsī, Nirmalā, Sewā Pañthī or other sects served as the custodians of their own *ḍerās* or the common Sikh religious establishments, the *gurdwārās*. Most of these *ḍerās* and *gurdwārās* served as elementary schools. There were others which provided education up to the higher secondary standard and some were known even as advanced centres of specialized learning. The *ḍerās* and *gurdwārās* had specialized libraries consisting of manuscripts. Subsequently, published books were regularly added to the existing stock. Some of these centres specialized in the fields of exegesis and explications of the Holy Text. There were others which specialized in prosody and still others which did so in one or the other school of Indian philosophy. There were some which were famous for their excellence in music or clinical and pharmaceutical achievements. About thirty-five years back, when the writer of these lines got interested in the collection of Gurmukhī manuscripts, he used to come across big repositories of manuscripts and printed books even in remote, rural, Sikh religious establishments

* First Published in *Journal of Sikh Studies*, Feb. 1978, Vol. V, No. 1.

in Punjab. The position has since changed beyond recognition. Some of these religious establishments which chose not to seek affiliation with Shiromaṇī Gurdwārā Prabandhak Committee (S.G.P.C.), now the chief controlling body of a large number of important Sikh shrines, are hardly interested in keeping their tryst with Sikh faith and have purposely allowed their manuscript libraries to be decimated. Some are still clinging on to the valuable stocks but with indifferent and insufficient care. What is, however, most regrettable is the fact that the new managers of the *derās* or the *gurdwārās* that came under the control or influence of the S.G.P.C. have generally been mute spectators to the decay of the specializations associated with these institutions, and to the wanton disappearance of specialized literature, some of which will have to be written off as irreplaceable loss. If we add to the inexcusable cultural insensitiveness of the official custodians of the Sikh places of worship, the practice of cremating ceremonially the very old, brittle, and decaying manuscripts at Goindwal (Amritsar), the bibliographical loss suffered by the Sikh community has been, to say the least, immense. Unfortunately, the responsible authorities have never thought of replenishing the loss of manuscripts even by published books. The Sikh Houses of the Book are, therefore, generally speaking, without books. When even the elementary concept of a library is missing, it would be futile to expect any *gurdwārā* to have a qualified librarian on its pay-roll. The result of this cessation of the source, from which flowed continuously the leaven of ideas into the minds of Sikhs, has been disastrous. The community has almost lost its intellectual moorings. Wherever there is faith, and it is there in abundance among the Sikhs, it tends to depend more on obeisance than on understanding which is the result of study. Conviction, unsupported and unreplenished by regular spiritual, aesthetic and intellectual food, leads to vacuity, that is, frustration and death. As there is hardly any satisfactory substitute for books, the re-induction of books to the Houses of the Book seems to be the easiest way out of the present cultural impasse. Bibliophilic *gurdwārās* should be in a position to instill bibliophilism among the faithful. We know that in a country

like India, the plea of financial stringency will always be dished out to stall expenditure on nation-building projects. We are certain that our pleading for the provision of libraries in the Houses of the Book, is not going to cause a run on the book stores. But it is open to us to think of the second best alternative so that the need for making recurring investments on the purchase of books and the enrolment of librarians is obviated. We wish to present here a proposal with the hope that the people now in charge of the religious affairs of the community will find it eminently practicable and suitable as it does not seek to rely solely on their budgets, although it promises to bring in the community over-all cultural upliftment.

The proposal set forth here calls for the setting up of an autonomous organization with the active involvement of S.G.P.C. and other Sikh bodies. It may have an initial capital of Rs. 5,00,000 to be augmented by loans from the government and the banks, if necessary. To begin with, this organization will call upon one hundred selected *gurdwārās* in India and foreign countries, to give it, on nominal rent, good furnished accommodation for storing and displaying books and journals. It should succeed in securing sole selling rights for certain publications brought out by S.G.P.C. Amritsar; Delhi Gurdwārā Prabandhak Committee, Delhi; Guru Nanak Dev University, Amritsar; Punjabi University, Patiala; Panjab University, Chandigarh; Punjab Agricultural University, Ludhiana; Punjab University, Lahore ; Languages Department, Punjab, Patiala, and other government and semi-government publishers. It will negotiate with private publishers for favourable trade discounts. The organization will not only place orders for different editions of the *Gurū Granth Sāhib*, its commentaries, works on Sikh religion, philosophy, history and culture, and publications of such writers as Vir Singh, Puran Singh, Jodh Singh, Teja Singh, Tara Singh, Niranjan Singh, Sahib Singh, Balbir Singh, Ganda Singh, Kapur Singh, Gurbachan Singh Talib, Gopal Singh, Harbans Singh, Taran Singh, etc., but also help sell relevant books in English, Hindi, Urdu and other languages that have any bearing on religion, philosophy, ethics, physical health, sociology, political science, economics,

history, geography, anthropology, poetics, linguistics, etc., in general, and Sikh and Punjabi Studies in particular. Technical books on such subjects as electricity, agriculture, horticulture, industry, commerce, dairy-farming, poultry, needle-work, photography, sports and warfare may also be stored. Helpful literature for children, women and youth will naturally be there. The organization is expected to employ at least one energetic salesman and one helper per shop. Provision for incentives in the form of commission on all sales beyond a specific amount and annual awards and prizes for outstanding workers will have to be made to ensure maximum sale of books.

Except the private publishers, some of whom have their own retail sales depots in different cities, none of the big institutions like the universities have their own satisfactory retail sales arrangements. If the idea of utilizing the *gurdwārās* as clearing houses for healthy literature catches the imagination of the Sikh leaders connected with the S.G.P.C. and other Sikh bodies, the initial order for each publication is not likely to be less than 200 copies, i.e., two copies per shop. The order will go up as the sales at the shops get into stride. Almost all publishers will be ready to give liberal trade discounts and may even agree to give their publications on credit, if the organization succeeds in creating confidence among them about its pay-worthiness.

The project is purely commercial in nature but we are certain that the results will be culture-oriented. Wherever they are, the Sikh people are well-settled, though one could not vouch for their habit to go in for books. Everywhere, *gurdwārās* serve as meeting places of the faithful. It is, therefore, expected that when books become available in the premises of the *gurdwārās*, especially in those *gurdwārās* which are centrally situated, the people who have to travel long distances to buy even their Holy Book will be happy and grateful to the organization. The Principal of a Christian College at Batala once narrated to the writer how he had found all the members of some families, even in tiny villages, clamouring for books, when on Saturdays he used to carry a mini-library of Punjabi books on a trolley to villages around Batala. The project suggested here is not

on all fours with the experiment of the Batala Principal. But we have no doubt that with the standard of living of the Sikhs showing an increasingly upward trend, more and more people can be persuaded to have the pleasure of possessing a shelf or two of the books of their own choice, in their homes, specially when these are made to reach their very homes. Books are going to help people become more useful citizens. These will bring them in touch with the latest thinking of the world. These will deepen and widen their understanding of their own and other peoples and will engage them in more worthwhile pursuits than many which occupy them now. If the project suggested here gets a start, quite a number of unemployed youngmen will get employed; writers, printers, publishers, and everyone else connected with the book trade will be benefited, but more important than all other benefits will be the invaluable spiritual, intellectual and cultural benefits that will accrue to the community in the long run.

All these benefits and a few more may be possible without much recurring expenditure, if the Houses of the Book are allowed to be used as book-houses also.

Lasting Peace, Disarmament and Just Relations among Nations*

The writer had the pleasant experience of attending the World Conference of Religious Workers for Lasting Peace, Disarmament and Just Relations among Nations, held in Moscow from June 6, 1977 to June 10, 1977. The invitation came from Metropolitan Juvenaly of Tula and Belev, the Chairman of the Preparatory Committee for the World Conference. The idea for holding a grand convention of this nature had emanated originally from the Primate of the Russian Orthodox Church, His Holiness Patriarch Pimen of Moscow and All Russia, and had been confirmed later by the heads and representatives of all churches and religious associations of the Soviet Union at a meeting held in the Trinity St. Sergius Lavra in September 1975. The Preparatory Committee which first met in Moscow from March 29 to 31, 1976 elected an International Preparatory Committee to make arrangements for the proposed Conference. The International Preparatory Committee met on September 28-30, 1976 and decided that the Conference would hear one major report and three co-reports of the three working groups on Lasting Peace, Disarmament and Just Relations among Nations, respectively. Separate meetings of co-religionists were also planned. The delegates were given the option to participate in the deliberations of any one of the three groups. The writer of these lines opted for the membership of the Working Group on Just Relations among Nations. The Conference, a great success by all standards, was hosted lavishly by the Russian Orthodox Church.

* Read in the conference on "Lasting Peace, Disarmament and Just Relations among Nations" held in Moscow from 6 June–10 June 1977.

Headed by Metropolitan Juvenaly of Tula and Belev, Chairman of the External Relations Department of Moscow, Patriarchate, U.S.S.R., the International Preparatory Committee consisted of 55 members representing 30 countries of the world, including India. The religions represented in the Committee were Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism, and Shintoism. Sikhism was not represented there, but at the World Conference, it was represented by Dr. Taran Singh, Head of the Department of Guru Granth Studies, Punjabi University, Patiala and this writer.

The Working Group for Just Relations among Nations met in two sub-groups. The first group met under the chairmanship of Dr. Sean McBride, a Roman Catholic from Ireland. Incidentally, Dr. McBride spoke to the writer feelingly about his warm relations with the late Prime Minister of India, Shri Jawaharlal Nehru. The second sub-group met under the chairmanship of Dr. Karoly Toth, General Secretary, Christian Peace Conference, Reformed Church of Hungary.

Both the Sikh delegates attended the sub-group presided over by Dr. McBride. The Working Group converted three of its sittings into a 'Workshop According to Relations' in which the delegates were invited to discuss, freely and frankly, the subject of Just Relations from the point of view of their respective religions. The only curb applied was the strict rationing of time. The writer had the honour of presenting the Sikh point of view on the subject in the third plenary session of the Workshop held on June 9, 1977. It was probably for the first time in the history of the U.S.S.R. that a Sikh had held the public floor to put forth the Sikh view-point on a subject which has always exercised the Sikh mind. The writer, therefore, utilised the opportunity to impress upon the august body the need to place on their agenda intra-nation justice also alongwith inter-nation justice in order to safeguard the interests of religious and other minorities. The text of this short address is being reproduced here :

It is a development of great significance that workers of different religious denominations hailing from different countries of the world are sharing with one another what their respective religions have to say about such global questions as Peace, Disarmament and Just Relations among Nations.

Our debt towards the great religious leadership of the world for floating source-ideas that have been impelling mankind for thousands of years towards the achievement of tension-free minds and societies has been so tremendous that, whether out of genuine belief or sheer habit, millions of people continue to pin their faith in the efficacy of their messages.

This faith is there in spite of the blood-bath which each major religion had to undergo and the perpetration, at times organized by the religions themselves, of heinous crimes against mankind, under the cloak of preserving the purity of doctrine or increasing the number of their believers.

I belong to a religion which is known as Sikhism. A large majority of the followers of Guru Nanak (1469-1539), the founder of Sikhism, live in the northern parts of India. During their not too long history of five centuries, the Sikhs had to undergo terrible overt and covert persecutions at the hands of the State and other established religions. So much so, in the early eighteenth century, royal proclamations were issued to effect their extermination. The number of Sikhs who had a tryst with martyrdom ran into thousands. Such gory experiences of the religious people amply justify a call by the Conference for the creation of a mental climate of toleration towards religious and other minorities of the World and at the same time developing intolerance towards injustice or discrimination against minorities.

The Human Rights charter is a valuable document indeed and more so for the Sikhs because it corroborates the belief of our founder that no civilised administrative set-up worth its name has any right to continue if it does not practice justice (*Gurū Granth*, p. 1240).

It will be good if the Conference reiterates its faith in the sanctity of basic human rights, but its real success will lie in devising a permanent machinery of its own that will move in timely and effectively, whenever and wherever violations of justice occur.

Justice involves not only equality of treatment but also propriety of punishment. As we are not meeting here as

representatives of political bodies, it is not for us to mete out punishments to the violators of just relations among nations. We meet here as representatives of the religious conscience of the world and have to look at the whole thing from that point of view. If religious people decide to resist organised discrimination and injustice, whether indulged in by State or Church through globally organised non-cooperation at all levels of human activity, they shall be providing not only a rationale to this Conference but shall also be establishing their bona-fides.

Guru Tegh Bahadur, the ninth Guru of the Sikhs, who had ten Gurus (Masters) in all, gave practical demonstration of a method more effective than non-cooperation, namely, laying down one's life to undo injustice to a community other than one's own. But that is a course which only the greatest religious souls may be expected to follow.

However, the minimum expectations of the people who live under conditions of extreme injustice will be fulfilled if the religious conscience of the World, represented by this Conference, organizes ways and means to take up their causes and if need be, to suffer with them.

That, in our opinion, would be the correct religious approach towards bringing about Just Relations among Communities and Nations and for this, a standing Fact-Finding Commission, comprising all major religions of the world, may be formed. This suggestion should, in no way, make us forget that it is in the minds of men that ideas of selfishness, injustice, exploitation, and violence take birth and no religious approach to the problem can be effective unless an intensive and organised programme is undertaken to educate the minds of people, not only at the usual intra-religious level but also at the inter-religious level, towards which this Conference is a very good pointer.

We, the Sikh participants, wish the deliberations of the Conference success with the Sikh salutation : *Wāhigurū Jī kā Khālā, Wāhigurū Jī kī Fateh* (The Khalsa belongs to God Himself ; the Khalsa's victory is God's own victory).

The Sikh delegation consisted of only two members out of a total of approximately 650 persons representing 107 countries, but the massive number of queries addressed to the writer and his colleague, after the former's appearance on the stage, and the promises elicited by a number of delegates wanting literature on Sikh religion and history, provided yet another occasion when the writer had to feel greatly embarrassed for the glaring deficiency of suitable reading material relating to Sikh history and religion.

Presently, however, this is not the moral that the writer would wish to draw from the Conference for the benefit of organised Sikh bodies, such as the Shiromaṇī Gurdwārā Prabandhak Committee, the Shiromaṇī Akālī Dal, and the Chief Khalsa Diwan. The consciousness about paucity of introductory and advanced literature on Sikh themes does exist in all responsible Sikh quarters and as long as that consciousness exists, we may be sure that positive results will follow. It is, in fact, the comparative non-involvement of our religious bodies with major and urgent problems of our world, like Lasting Peace, Disarmament, and Just Relations among Nations to which the writer wants the pointed attention of the organised Sikh opinion to be drawn through this article.

Irrespective of whether their services are properly recognised or not, most of the organised Sikh bodies have played commendable roles whenever a natural or man-made calamity has befallen our country; they have never been found wanting whenever the country has been in danger of external aggression; they have the tradition of coming spontaneously to the rescue of the oppressed. They have suffered incarceration, loss of life and property for the cause of civil liberties, but till now almost all such activities have been confined to their own country. Few Sikh bodies, if any at all, have cared to come out of their national cocoons, to fight for deserving international causes. From amongst religions, this role has been done mainly by Christians.

We know that the Sikh people, as a whole, are as much interested in the establishment of lasting peace in the world as any other people. They do not want their children and their homes to be destroyed by giant engines of destruction. They also do not relish

any one being subjected to any discrimination or exploitation. Further, social service being an essential Sikh tenet, the Sikhs have a strong altruistic instinct which it should not be difficult to divert to a good international cause. For example, if it were to be impressed upon Sikh congregations that at a time when "two-thirds of humanity goes to bed hungry, the nations of the world spend more than 300 billion dollars a year on war and armament, which is a sheer waste of more than 800 million dollars a day, while it cost the W.H.O. a mere 83 million dollars to practically wipe out small-pox from the face of the earth," every Sikh will understand how disarmament is going to benefit him and his co-religionists alongwith the others. Similarly, the proper education of the devout Sikh *saṅgats* in the *gurdwārās* about what is happening to the black majority, in its own home, under the white minority rule in South Africa, is sure to produce a deeply sympathetic, even fighting response in favour of the South African natives.

The Sikhs have had long and bitter experience of struggling against oppression, discrimination and injustice. That is the reason why their hearts go out in sympathy towards such sufferers. It is, therefore, the duty of those who control Sikh places of worship to train the Sikh sympathies to flow beyond national frontiers. It is well-known that the Sikh ethos does not regard religion and politics as two mutually exclusive human activities. Many Sikh places of worship have played the role of political storm-centres in history. Authentic tradition behind the Akāl Takht sanctions the use of the community's *gurdwārās* for the community's politics. However, over the past 50 years or so, the electoral activity connected with the management of the *gurdwārās* has been overshadowing all their other useful activities. Even a casual survey of the points of discussion among the faithful who visit the places of worship everyday will establish that the minds of most of them are exercised over petty domestic or local problems only. Empty minds coming daily out of places of worship are a sure indication of the holiday that *gurdwārā* leadership is enjoying. A pervasive feeling of purposelessness, of utter vacuity, must be regarded as a danger by any one connected in any way with the management of human affairs, more so of religious

affairs. It is all the more dangerous for a community of activists, which the Sikhs undoubtedly are. The situation is already being exploited by a number of opportunists who are enticing the unwary faithfuls of the mainstream into blind doctrinal alleys. There are many avenues open to the Sikh leadership to activate their *gurdwārā* services, but it is the writer's conviction that a conscious effort to widen the area of Sikh interests from the politics of the *gurdwārā* or even that of the state and country to the world around us will provide new rallying points to the community. The expansion of mind that follows the extension and diversification of sympathy is its own valuable reward. Let the Guru's house develop sensitive antennae to discover the clandestine anti-people moves that are made by vested interests on the world's political chessboard. The Guru's message was universal and thoroughly humanitarian. There is no way out for those who believe in the Guru's message, but to be thorough and all-engulfing in their humanitarianism. One positive result of the extension in Sikh sympathies will be the coming into contact of Sikh leaders with the leaders of the other religious denominations and the writer is certain that these contacts will stand the Sikhs in good stead in times of difficulty.

It is suggested that the Shiromanī Gurdwārā Prabandhak Committee, Shiromanī Akālī Dal, and Chief Khalsa Diwan should have their own permanent External Affairs Divisions, staffed by highly qualified analysts. Besides looking to the welfare of the Sikhs settled abroad, the Division may be expected to submit, to the parent bodies, regular reports on all issues affecting the life of man on our planet and to advise them about the nature and extent of the moral and material support to be given by the Sikhs to those who raise their voice in favour of peace and human dignity. While, by doing so, the Sikhs will be fulfilling the Guru's dream of carrying Sikh values to the doors of people of all countries, it will also open up new dimensions for their future work.

This, in short, is the moral that the writer wants to draw for the Sikhs from the unique Conference of Religious Workers for Lasting Peace, Disarmament and Just Relations among the Nations held in Moscow in June 1977.

The Problems of Secularism in a Multi-Religious Society : The Sikh Experience*

I

The problems faced by a religiously plural society can be understood properly if the subject is viewed from the standpoints of the State as well as the religious communities constituting the society. Also, the nature and quantum of the problems and their solutions will vary according to the basic ideology of the State. For instance, under a theocratic government, the followers of non-official religions may be presumed to enjoy less-privileged citizenship as compared to those who belong to the State religion. Similarly, a genuinely anti-religious administration may look askance at all organized religious communities. In this write-up, I do not propose to discuss problems arising in such societies. My attention will be focused on the nature of problems that multi-religious secular India faces, in spite of its constitutional provisions assuring equidistance from all religions, non-interference with doctrinal and credal systems, freedom to learn, educate, even proselytise, and non-discrimination on the basis of religious beliefs. For religious minorities, these are quite a desirable set of assurances. In fact, who will not like equal operation of law, unprejudiced dispensation of justice, freedom to acquire and disseminate knowledge, and the possibility of occupying even the most strategically sensitive and the most highly responsible public office on merit ?

* Written at the instance of Indian Council of Social Science Research, New Delhi and read in the meeting of Indo-Soviet Seminar held in Tashkent (Uzbekistan), U.S.S.R. in Nov. 1978.

According to the religious minorities, the trouble lies not so much in the provisions available in the Constitution as in the actual implementation of the promises made therein. We give here a few of their imputations : Delimitation of electoral constituencies for the Parliament and the legislative assemblies is done to the detriment of religious minorities;¹ boundaries of the federated units are maldrawn with malicious intentions;² merit has to face hostile prejudice and entrenched privilege;³ languages associated with minority religions are suppressed;⁴ development of the areas inhabited by the minority religions is delayed or gets postponed ad infinitum;⁵ the proverbial cat's paw is used to bring about breakdown in the law and order so that loss of life, property and means of livelihood may create panic amongst members of the affected minority;⁶ press campaigns are let loose to misrepresent, denigrate and ridicule religious minorities;⁷ the

1. Gauba, K.L., *Passive Voices*, 1973, Bombay, Thakar & Co. Ltd., p. 56.
2. "... The Shah commission...have firstly arbitrarily truncated and reduced, as much as they could, the existing Punjabi region, and secondly, applied all principles of demarcation with a left-handed justice, made use of a principle where it could harm the Punjab and not used it where it could harm the resultant territorial interests of Haryana or Himachal Pradesh...*Some Documents on the Demand for the Sikh Homeland*, 1969, Chandigarh, All India Sikh Students Federation, p. 33, hereafter cited as *Some Documents*.
3. Gauba, K.L. *op.cit.*, pp. 41-42, 361.
- 4 (i) "... A language is disowned because it has the misfortune of being patronised by the Sikhs—Ravel Singh, in the Foreword of *Punjabi Suba Demand*, 1966, Amritsar, Shiromani Gurdwara Prabandhak Committee.
(ii) "The Sikhs resent the step-motherly treatment meted out to Punjabi language in the adjoining states of Delhi, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu & Kashmir and Rajasthan..." Memorandum Presented to Shrimati Indira Gandhi, the Prime Minister of India, New Delhi by the Chief Khalsa Diwan, Amritsar, on 14th July, 1975, p.3.
(iii) See Gauba, K.L. *op.cit.*, p. 363, for discriminatory treatment with Urdu.
5. Ramuwalla, Balwant Singh (President, All India Sikh Students Federation; now M.P.), *Punjab di Dhaun Ute Talwar* (Sword on the Neck of the Punjab), Shiromani Akali Dal, Amritsar, 1972, pp. 7-22.
6. Cf. the speech of Frank Anthony (Nominated Anglo-Indian) in the Lok Sabha, reproduced in Gauba, K.L., *op.cit.*, p. 343.
7. "Apart from the legislature, the judiciary and the executive, there is another power in the State which is called, the Press, and allied means of these communications, such as Radio and Television. These are either state monopolies or virtual monopolies in the hands of members of the majority. There are not a few Sikhs who are sorely grieved at the treatment meted out to them in this quarter through misrepresentation as well as through suppression of news. *"Some Documents," op.cit.*, p. 53.

entire community's patriotism is sought to be made suspect;⁸ assimilation and merger, rather than cultural plurality, are projected as national ideas;⁹ and wherever possible, even the judicial processes are distorted to rob the religious minorities of their rights.¹⁰

These may be taken as specimen of the charges that are levelled against the governments of the federated states and the Centre, both of which are imagined by the alleging minorities as being the repositories of the interests of the majority community. The majority community retaliates, through press and platform, with such

8. (i) "Sikhs feel that they are not being trusted otherwise there was no reason why an exception should have been made in respect of formation of Punjabi Suba alone". *Punjabi Suba Demand*, 1966, Amritsar, the Shiromani Gurdwara Prabandhak Committee, p. 4 of the initial unpaginated pages.
- (ii) "Even the Deputy Prime Minister Sardar Patel suspected that most of the Muslims were disloyal to India... Mohammad Ghose, *Secularism, Society and Law in India*, 1973, Delhi, Vikas Publishing House Pvt. Ltd., p. 8.
9. "... The most urgent problem of Indian nationalism today therefore is to Indianise or Hinduise such people and to develop in them national consciousness as members of different religious communities.... in short, they must adopt Indian attitude, that national attitude towards their religion which must cease to colour their loyalties towards the mainsprings of Indian nationalism. All talk of separate Muslim or Christian or for that matter Sikh or Jain culture must stop. India is one country and it has but one culture." Madhok, Balraj, *Indian Nationalism*, Bharati Sahitya Sadan, 1969, New Delhi, pp. 96-97.
The works of V.D. Savarkar and Golwalkar may be consulted for more elaborate exposition of this point of view.
See also, *The Spokesman Weekly*, dated May 15, 1978, New Delhi, in which Hukam Singh, former Speaker of the (Indian) Lok Sabha, writes, "... The Policy of Indian Government since Independence whatever its complexion and whichever the cloak it has worn, has been to absorb and assimilate the Sikhs, and not to give any recognition by which these might further prolong their existence as a distinct community..."
10. The working Committee of Shiromani Akali Dal passed the following resolution in its meeting held on 20.7.1966.
"... After having carefully viewed the findings, the reports and judgements of judicial and quasi-judicial Tribunals and Forums that have dealt with matters and cases involving important Sikh interests, COMES TO THE CONCLUSION that the entire judicial machinery and the judicial process of the Independent India, under influence of a certain section of political Hindus, is prejudiced and has been perverted against the Sikh people in India in relation to their just and legal rights..." Quoted by S. Kapur Singh M.A. in his speech made in the Lok Sabha on Sept. 6, 1966 reproduced in *Some Documents*, *op.cit.*, pp. 33-34.

allegations as tardiness in relinquishing the blatantly confrontational postures developed by the religious minorities during the later half of the 19th century. They are pictured as people with bloated self-images wanting to be carried on the shoulders of others with the help of weightages, reservations, and special treatments. They are also dubbed as psychotics, typifying a perpetually aggrieved complainant. A cursory survey of the editorial page of only one Urdu newspaper of Jalandhar, the *Hind Samachar*, will be enough to provide any number of such accusations against Sikh politics. If we add to these charges and counter-charges, examples of other inter-community and intra-community tensions, the scene it will present to any social scientist will be one of the incrimination of interests and ideals. Such social and psychological maladjustments, though not uncommon in most of the multi-religious, mutli-cultural, or multi-racial societies of the world, do call for the attention of psycho-social pathologists, specially because disputes of religious nature often find expression in outbreaks of violence and vandalism.

In order to establish how well-entrenched and multi-dimensional the roots of the problems are, it is proposed to view contemporary behavioural compulsions of one of the Indian religious minorities, the Sikhs, through the prism of its history.

II

When Guru Nanak, the founder of Sikhism, was born in A.D. 1469, there were in the North-West of India two major religions, viz., Islam and Hinduism. The rulers, though in a minority, were Mussalmans and the majority of the subjects were Hindus. Guru Nanak established his own spiritual-cum-ethical way of life which soon caught the imagination of the people of the Punjab. The nascent religion had, from the very beginning, the seeds of political viability. The Sikhs, the followers of Guru Nanak and of his nine spiritual successors, had unflinching faith in the Guru. Economic self-reliance, achieved through hard labour, having become an article of faith with the Sikhs, they developed, rather early in their career, a sensitive feel for self-respect. "Damned be the morsel for which self-

respect has to be bartered,” is one of Guru Nanak’s sayings. The Sikhs devised an inbuilt system for co-operative provision of free food, accomodation, and security to the needy. Better status was promised to women, tillers of land, and manual workers—the sections of society which had long been denied opportunities for upward social mobility. The affirmation accorded by the Sikh religion to the physical world and to honest worldly pursuits must have come as God-sent to the commodity-producing sections of society. By the time of Guru Arjan, the fourth successor of Guru Nanak, it became impossible for the government of the day to shut its eyes to the fast-developing sinews of the new faith which, clearly, was not just another quietist version of the legion Hindu sects. Sensing danger, the Mughal emperor, Jehangir, who stigmatized the new faith as an ‘unholy concern’ in his autobiography *Tuzk*, passed orders for torturing Guru Arjan Dev to death.

Reacting sharply, Guru Arjan’s son and successor, Guru Hargobind, began sporting all the concomitants of royalty and clashed with the forces of the State a number of times. Many of those who were not on the right side of the government started rallying round him. Understandably, the office of the Guru tended to become non-grata with the Mughal administration. One of Guru Hargobind’s sons, Guru Tegh Bahadur, who became the ninth Guru of the Sikhs, had to pay with his head the price of his espousal of the cause of the oppressed. Guru Gobind Singh, the tenth and the last Guru of the Sikhs, formally legitimized for his Sikhs, counter-assertion and armed defence. He succeeded in overhauling the community temperamentally and invested it with an unmistakable personality. Baptised by him into Singhs (Lions), his Sikhs, developed a self-image of great confidence. They were the chosen ones of God and, therefore, always destined to win.¹¹ They became a full-fledged *tisarpānṭh*, the Third Alternative to Hinduism and Islam, with distinctive symbols and rituals and a separate charter of do’s and don’ts. Already, they had their own places of pilgrimage and a separate holy Book,

11. The formal Sikh greetings in *Wahiguru jī kī Khālsā Wahiguru jī kī Fateh*, i.e., The Khalsa belongs to God, God’s is the Victory.

the *Granth*, which Guru Gobind Singh willed to be invested with eternal Guruship after his death. Backed by all this, it was natural for the community to nurse political ambitions. Aurangzeb, the last of the Great Mughals, who died in 1707, left a bitter trail of anti-Sikhism behind. The trail was taken up by his successors, otherwise men of no consequence. Each successive occupant of the Indian throne was determined to give the Sikh community a taste of what it meant to make the church of worship a church of socio-political commitment.

The Sikhs reacted by solemnly vowing to accept nothing short of sovereignty. Thus began, during the later Mughal regime, an extremely critical phase in the life of the community. In order to defend themselves, the Sikhs perfected the art of guerilla warfare. It was during the first half of the eighteenth century that the passion for the political liberation crystalised into a corporate attitude of the community. The State struck hard by bringing into active operation all the engines of oppression, including genocide. Hence, the Sikh cause won massive support from the peasantry who went to the extent of offering one male member per family to compensate for the diminishing Sikh man-power. The Sikhs came out victorious from this difficult struggle and carved out for themselves various autonomous principalities under their respective leaders. Later, a loose confederation of the leaders was formed, but the emergence of Ranjit Singh, an able Sikh leader, put an end to these principalities, except the few which accepted the suzerainty of the British, who, after subjugating the rest of India, were now hovering along the south-eastern frontiers of Ranjit Singh's empire.

The Sikhs, in spite of their numerical increase, attendant upon political power, continued to be a minority during the Sikh regime. Mercifully, the Sikh leadership exhibited great maturity in not allowing any spill-over of their harrowing past to their present. Throughout the period of Sikh hegemony, no case of forcible conversion to Sikhism is reported to have occurred.

Maharaja Ranjit Singh died in A.D. 1839. Soon, the British made their presence felt in Lahore, the capital of the Sikh empire,

which they were able to annex formally within a decade. With the British, came to Punjab Christianity, the religion of the new rulers. Altogether different experiences awaited the Sikh community under the British dispensation. These ranged from near-extinction under the reeling impact of the British occupation, to a powerful revival, through the assertion of an autonomous Sikh identity. The heightened consciousness of exclusiveness was in the nature of a defensive measure against the inroads of Christian missionaries. It served also as a counterblast to the aggressively separatist politics, introduced in the Punjab by Hindus and Mussalmans of non-Punjabi extraction. Even before the close of the eighth decade of the nineteenth century, the people of the Punjab got divided into four warring communities—Hindus, Mussalmans, Sikhs, and Christians. Rather than defusing the explosive situation, the British rulers, who were the real wire-pullers, helped accentuate the infighting through devious means, including the conversion of religious communities into electoral colleges for their co-religionists. The idea, mooted much earlier,¹² was tried in 1888 by reserving Hindu and Muslim seats in municipal elections of Amritsar City,¹³ but came into full operation, through the Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms in 1919.¹⁴ This was the trump card which the rulers used against the rise of nationalism in their Indian empire. As intended, community-wise consolidation and inter-community tension touched a new high.¹⁵

Reverting to the predicament of the Sikhs in the seventies and eighties of the nineteenth century, we find them caught up in a vicious web. Till then, they had learnt either to face an antagonistic

12. Wilfred Cantwell Smith, *Modern Islam in India*, Lahore, pp. 189-190, quoted in *Secularism, Society and Law in India*, p. 42, f.n. 32. See also Tinkar Hug, *Foundations of Local-Self-Government in India, Pakistan and Burma*, 1967, Bombay, Lalwani Publishing House, pp. 41 and 49.

13. Tinkar, Hug, *op.cit.*, p. 50.

14. "The worst feature of the Montford Reforms was the perpetuation of vested interests in religious communities..," Munshi, K.M., *Pilgrimage to Freedom*, 1967, Bombay, Bhartiya Vidya Bhavan, p. 19.

15. Keith, A.B., *A Constitutional History of India*, 1936, London, Methuen & Co., Ltd., pp. 286-87.

state or had lived peacefully with other religions under a protecting umbrella. But now they were facing inter-community cross-iring, sometimes quite severe with a not-too-clean third party presiding over the unedifying exercise. Moreover, sheer numbers, which had never mattered much for them, were to become the only determinant for their share in the administration of the State. If they did not get into the strait jacket of 'communal' politics, they faced the danger of being written off as a factor of little consequence; if they accepted it, they had to rest content with a ten per cent share in the administration of their own 'homeland'. Discretion had the better of valour and they fell in line with the then prevalent pattern of Punjab politics and began to use all the defensive and offensive instruments employed by other communities. Like others, the Sikhs tried to shut themselves up in the security of exclusively Sikh organisations, namely, *Singh Sabhās*. Their places of worship, called the *gurdwārās*, became the centres of all their socio-religious revivalist activity. The Singh Sabha Movement threw the leadership of the community in the lap of the upcoming English-educated middle class, delimited its horizon to Sikhism, made the Sikhs more Sikh-minded, and fixed the gaze of the community at glory that was Sikh history. But the net social result of the religious efflorescence among the already segregated communities of the Punjab was sharp accentuation in mutual estrangement.

The British game was being played exactly to the prescribed tune when the bottled Sikh giant found itself accidentally uncorked in the early twenties of the 20th century. It all started with the Sikh wish to oust the corrupt priests who had sneaked into the control of their historical shrines. In this priest-Sikh confrontation, in which the British administration sided with the priests, members of the Sikh community were left with only two options : to be either with their co-religionists or with the administration. A large number opted for the former and as the Sikh plan of passive, non-violent resistance unfolded itself in the face of extremely savage baton-charges, firings, tortures, jail-terms, and confiscations of property, it brought about unparalleled cohesion among Sikh ranks and earned

full-throated encomiums from all quarters at home and abroad for their unflinching faith and perseverance. It was a newly-formed Sikh organization, the Shiromaṇī Akālī Dal (S.A.D.), founded on December 14, 1920, that provided the Sikhs with excellent leadership throughout this difficult period. The British administration was squarely humbled and the Dal emerged as the most authentic and representative mouthpiece for the socio-political aspirations of the Sikhs.¹⁶ The struggle also brought into existence a central managing body for Sikh *gurdwārās*, namely, Shiromaṇī Gurdwārā Prabandhak Committee (S.G.P.C.), to be elected by adult Sikh voters. It came into operation on November 1, 1925. Ever since the induction of popular vote in the management of the *gurdwārās*, religious politics has been the first concern of the Sikh community. Even now, the surest way to Sikh political leadership lies through the S.A.D. and the S.G.P.C.

When the British colonialists agreed to part with power, there was hectic political activity among the contending Indian successors. The All India Muslim League agitated for its demand for an independent Mussalman State of Pakistan. The idea of bifurcation of India, and that too on the basis of religion, was anathema to the Indian National Congress, but ultimately it fell in line with the League and the British thinking. The S.A.D. also, which had resolved on March 22, 1946 to call upon the 'Sikh Nation' to work wholeheartedly for the establishment of an 'independent Sikh State',¹⁷ was persuaded to follow the Congress way, in spite of the offer of an autonomous Sikh area within the jurisdiction of the proposed

16. "Modern Sikh History is centred round the Akali Party" Lord Birdwood in *A Continent Experiments*, quoted in Gulati, Kailash Chandar, *The Akalis: Past and Present*, 1974, New Delhi, Ashajanak Publications, p. 9. Reference may also be made to the New Policy Programme adopted by S.A.D. at Anandpur on 16th and 17th October, 1973 in which it is claimed that "S.A.D. is the only forum for the expression of the corporate will of the Sikh community and fully entitled to represent it." Clause A (1) of the Manifesto in Punjabi, *Shiromaṇī Akālī Dal dā Nawān Policy Programme*, 1974, Amritsar, published by Giani Ajmer Singh, Secretary Y.S.A.D. p. 3.

17. Gulshan, Dhanna Singh, *Ajī dā Punjab te Sikh Rājnitī* (Punjabi), 1978, Rampura Phul (Bhatinda), Dhaliwal Publishing House, p. 34.

Pakistan.¹⁸ This step was taken in the belief that the solemn assurances given by the Congress leaders, promising effective role to the Sikhs in the framing of the Constitution of India, would be honoured in letter and spirit after the attainment of freedom.¹⁹ The Muslim League was incensed at this drift in the Sikh politics. Then followed the unprecedented massacre as a result of which as many as a million people are reported to have lost their lives on both sides of the border and the whole surviving Sikh population, affluently settled in the territories of newly-formed Pakistan, had to migrate to India, lock-stock and barrel.

What the Great Exodus of 1947 from Pakistan and the equally Great Resettlement in the Indian Punjab and other States of India had in store for the community was that it was living now in the country of their own choice. Hindus, with whom the Sikhs were politically hand-in-glove, immediately before partition of India, were the only other major community left in the Indian Punjab. However, not many months had passed after independence when the Governor of the Punjab issued a secret letter to high Government officers directing them to consider all Sikhs as habitual criminals.²⁰ This letter, which got leaked out, upset the Sikhs greatly and hardened their posture against the none too sympathetic Central Government. Meanwhile, it is notable that the demographic situation had stabilised in the Indian Punjab, which raised the Sikh percentage to about 33. This concentration of a highly politicalized community along a not-too-friendly sensitive international border, was frowned

18. Gurnam Singh (Later, Chief Minister, Punjab), *A Unilingual Punjabi State and The Sikh Unrest*, 1960, published by the author, p. 28, also Kapur Singh, *Sachī Sākhī* (Punjabi), 1972, Jullundur, Raj Rup Prakashan, pp. 97-99. See also *Nawāi Waqt*, Lahore, Dated Dec. 16, 1968, reproduced on pp. 146-147, of *Sachī Sākhī*.

19. "... Mahatma Gandhi, Pandit Moti Lal Nehru and Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru went to meet Baba Kharak Singh at his place.... and gave the Sikhs a solemn assurance that after India achieves political freedom, no constitution shall be formed by the majority community unless it is freely acceptable to the Sikhs. This promise was then reduced into a formal policy resolution of AI India Congress Committee". Kapur Singh, *Four Speeches* (delivered in the ...Indian Parliament), 1974, Calcutta, The Sikh Cultural Centre, Calcutta, 1974, p. 9.

20. Referred to in the letter dated 5th July 1960. Addressed to the Prime Minister of India by Gurnam Singh, *op.cit.*, p. 39.

upon by some members of the majority community as an alarming development. Soon, cracks began to appear in the Hindu-Sikh solidarity and the jockeying for power by the two communities fell back into the already tried course of religion-based politics. Among the Sikhs, the S.A.D. and the S.G.P.C., both claiming to be defenders of faith, continued to hold the key to politics.

Immediately after independence, all the strings of political power were controlled by the Congress, both in the Punjab and at the Centre. It was a nationalist party, but veteran Sikh leaders felt that its nationalism had turned out to be an euphemism for assimilation whereby all regional cultures were required to merge themselves into one giant Indian, i.e., Hindu culture. The S.A.D. reacted violently against what it regarded as the communalism of the majority.²¹ It was already smarting under the belief that it had been cheated out of power and prestige. Its noise, therefore, was loud and its following among the Sikhs, massive. Goaded by a feeling of persecution and deprivation, some Sikh extremists resumed the talk of an independent Sikh state. There were others, the Sikh Homelander, more sophisticated and subtle, who were successful in selling their idea to the S.A.D. "Khalsa is a State" was their argument and "Sovereignty is a *sui generis* characteristic of the Khalsa." Its "duty, therefore, is firstly to carve out and establish for themselves a congenial habitat and milieu wherein the guiding impulses and postulates of the Sikh society can freely operate and fructify."²² The Sikh Homeland was envisaged as an integral part of India, but the idea got a severe drubbing from the urban political publicists of the Punjab state and the centre, which in turn, served as grist to the S.A.D. mill. After brave, unbending public postures, both the Congress Government and the Dal climbed down to trying a number of midway alternatives which, after half-hearted trials, were rejected by the S.A.D. The S.A.D. had to organize massive agitations, to bend

21. "...by some deliberate design or irresistible development of events, there pervades in the political atmosphere of India, an oppressive and stifling climate of dominant group opinion and governmental trend, in which it is *verboten* to breathe unless in harmony with the wishes and prejudices of the communal majority.." *ibid.*, p. 38.

22. Kapur Singh, "Sikhism and Politics", *The Sikh Review*, August, 1971, Calcutta, p. 47.

a reluctant Central Government into carving out a Punjabi-speaking state within the Indian Union.²³ The S.A.D. was thoroughly dissatisfied, and continues to be so, at the exclusion of certain areas from the new state.²⁴ Interestingly, however, Punjabi language has come handy as a secular instrument to achieve a compact Sikh-dominated province.²⁵

In the new Punjab State, which came into being in 1966, the Sikhs, for the first time in their history found themselves in a slender numerical majority. The S.A.D., as was expected, have had, since then, some occasions of ruling the Punjab State, in collaboration with other parties of the left and the right.

III

It is little wonder that with such actionful past, the community's reflexes have been trained to be homeo-responsive to its salient historical referents. Appeal to some of these, viz., to Guru Gobind Singh or his martyred sons, has been found to be highly effective community-stimulants.²⁶ The S.A.D. knows this and has

23. "... in 1955, there was an agitation for this demand and twelve thousand Sikhs went to jail. Then in 1960, the movement continued for nearly eight months and 57,129 men and women went to jails..."Arjan Singh Buddhiraja, *Two Talks, Between Sant Fateh Singh ji and Shri Lal Bahadur Shastri the Prime Minister of India*, Akālī Dal, Delhi State, nd., p. 10.

24. The All World Panthic Convention of the Sikhs held on Jan. 10, 1970, passed a bitter resolution which spoke of Govt. of India's attitude of "great injustice, discrimination, oppression, *zulam* and violence" towards, the Punjabis in general and the Sikhs in particular and complained that while creating Punjabi Suba, it had resorted to "fraud, oppression and injustice of a low order and thus snatched from the Punjabi-Speaking State, Chandigarh, Bhakra Complex and some Punjabi-speaking areas". Quoted in Sarhadi, Ajit Singh, *Punjabi Suba*, 1979, Delhi, U.C. Kapur & Sons, p. 475.

25. "The unilingual Punjabi State was demand by the Sikhs not because they considered any particular language as necessary for their spiritual survival or cultural viability but because they wanted to employ a fashionable political idiom to salvage their identity and to realise their destiny...", *Some Documents, op.cit.*, p. 64. To be fair, however, to Sant Fateh Singh, the Dictator of Punjabi Suba Morcha, he confined himself scrupulously to the linguistic parameters only.

26. *Abhul Yādān* the lectures of Sant Fateh Singh, President S.A.D. and Dictator of Punjabi Suba Morcha, published by Sant Chanan Singh, Bagga Singh, ☞

been successfully using such referents to induce wholesale emotional arousal of the community. Simultaneously, however, the community has been experiencing other challenges, so very different from the earlier ones, that neither its dependence on its past exploits nor the recurring exhibitions of danger-signals may be of much help to it in facing these. The religious unconcern of the giant official educational apparatus, the audio-visual mass media, the judiciary and all official employment agencies on the one hand and the emergence of new socio-economic parameters of consciousness as a sequel to the induction of science and technology in all fields of human activity on the other, have set in motion a process of recession of social life from the tutelage of institutionalized religion. Slackness in the observance of religious rituals, practices and injunctions, and some cooling off in the feeling of belongingness is already in evidence among the Sikh youth.²⁷ The attack mounted by Marxism has a more penetrating thrust than passive secularism as it claims to provide a materialistic alternative to the institution of religion.²⁸ Further, the monolithic character of the community is under attack by leftist analysts who revel in proving that religio-political slogans in the past have helped consolidate class interests of only the urban money-bags and the rural landed aristocracy among the Sikhs. Furthermore, the Union and State Governments are taking over the responsibility of welfare programmes, formerly conducted under the banner of religion. On top of it all, the Indian Constitution does not lend itself easily to providing safeguards to any religion in danger. For instance, howsoever angry a S.A.D. Government in the Punjab may be at the Sikh young men, who choose to violate such religious taboos as shaving or smoking, it

☛ Gurdwārā Budhā Jauhar, 1962, Ganga Nagar, Rajasthan, are a good example of the powerful stimulus that is successfully created among the Sikhs through reference to their martyrs.

27. "...the process of distintegration of the collective soul of the Khalsa, set into motion by the Constitution Act 1950, with its overtones of secularism..." *Some Documents*, *op. cit.*, p. 71.

28. "...the corroding influences of ideologies that stalk this sacred land of India in the guise of socialism communism..." *ibid.*, p. 71.

may find it genuinely difficult to undertake any legislative measures against the defaulters.²⁹

We know that irrespective of all other basic urges, the visible bond that binds the Sikhs into a community is that of religion which is their medium both for self-identification and for distinction from others. But at least, as important as religion is the other contemporary social reality of secularism, with which all religion-based communities have to contend. The notional juxtaposition of religion and secularism is that of two opposites. While religion is God-centred, secularism is man-centred; while one believes in spiritualism, the other believes in materialism; while the one hopes to live after death, the other's earthly journey ends finally with his death; while the one believes in mystical experience, the other pins its faith on empiricism. Secularism also claims to substitute enquiry for reverential belief, change for tradition and nationalism for sectarianism. This is no place for apportioning credibility to the rival claims of religion and materialistic secularism. If religion is believed by secularists to crouch only in those regions now, which have not been explored fully yet by the searchlight of science, the religionists hope that the aridity of pure reason and the profligacy of material surfeit will force the materialists to seek peace of mind in the by-lanes of religion. Even so, in spite of the almost total rejection of secularization as an independent variable by Martin,³⁰ and serious obfuscation discovered by Glasner³¹ among social scientists of the world about the sociology of secularism, it may be admitted that institutionalized religion has been yielding some ground to secularism, either by making workable adjustments with it or, wherever found

29. The following observations made by Kapur Singh, ex. M.P. in a speech made at the Annual Meeting of All India Sikh Students Association at Chandigarh on 23.8.78 may be relevant in this connection: "In such a State (i.e., the proposed Sikh Homeland), we shall be able to ban public smoking in the interest of national health and penalise apostasy, back-sliding and other forms of decay in human character, through legislative measures." *ibid.*, p. 71.

30. Maretin, David, *The Religious and the Secular*, 1969, London, Reutledge & Kagan Paul.

31. Glasner, Peter E., *The Sociology of Secularisation*, 1977, New Delhi, Ambika Publications.

expedient, reserving "the activities of religious organization...to the realm of voluntarism and personal conviction."³² By and large, the Sikhs have also developed similar defensive mechanism against heavy inroad of secularism, although their non-rejection of the physical world, insistence on family life, and belief in the dignity of labour soften them towards so many aspects of secularism that they readily appropriate some of its elements, meet others half-way, and stand up against a few others. For example, they take very kindly to the pursuit and application of science and technology; their intellectuals now try to explain their faith rationally; they rarely uphold superstition and either disbelieve or give scientific explanation of miracles. Also, they are keen to participate in the production of wealth³³ and make many other suitable adjustments with the changing socio-economic patterns of life. So much so, that few from amongst the most conservative of Sikhs would like to forego the characteristic benefits of modern living, in spite of its commitment to secularism. Yet, it will be quite misleading to carry the impression that Sikhism, as an institution, is on the run and unadulterated secularism, equated here with materialism, is going to have an easy run over.

IV

The reasons for the Sikh community's resistance to secularism range from the usual ones that all religions marshal against it, to those that are born of the doctrinal, geo-historical, demographic, international, and even intra-community situations affecting the main body of the Sikhs. We could leave alone the stock objections and would refer to a few which can be traced ultimately to the desire

32. Reist, Benjamin A., "Church and State in America: A Theological Enquiry" in Lee, Robert & Marty, Martin E., ed. *Religion and Social Conflict*, 1964, New York, Oxford University Press, p. 133.

33. "...To do away with poverty, hunger and shortages and to increase production of goods and wealth in order to bring about a just and good system..." (Translation from Punjabi), *Shiromani Akali Dal da Programme* (as adopted by S.A.D. Working Committee at Anandpur on October 16, & 17, 1973 and later passed by the General Body), 1974, Amritsar, Published by Giani Ajmer Singh, Secretary, S.A.D. p. 3.

for identity, security and power. It has been mentioned earlier that in the Punjab State, the numerical tilt is presently slightly in favour of the Sikhs. The Hindus of the Punjab have not lost much time in developing the psychology of a minority community and in order to encash their minority status, most of them own Hindi language, the official languages of the Centre, even at the cost of their mother tongue, Punjabi, want education to be kept on the concurrent list of the Central Government, oppose any devolution of additional rights and powers to the federated units, and hob-nob directly with their counterparts in the Central Government in order that the Sikh aspirations for more power can be checked effectively. This makes Sikh politicians fret and fume and charge Punjabi Hindus as being 'obstructionist counterweights' while the Hindus retort by calling them 'oppressive', 'boorish' and 'communal'. Such a state of affairs makes possible the sustenance of a bi-polar, high-tensional politics, in which the S.A.D. and Hindu communal bodies, such as Rashtriya Swayam-Sewak Sangh (R.S.S.) and Jana Sangh, now merged in the Janata Party, feed each other's extremism. The misinterpretation or mal-implementation of liberal constitutional provisions, as already referred to earlier in this write-up, will always be expected to engender strong Sikh reactions, but intra-community segmental realignments, frustrations arising from the loss of political power, clash of mutually-countervailing aspirations of selfish politicians, and failure to achieve the promised political stability and economic growth at government level may also be twisted into extremist community postures. In an atmosphere where community interest becomes the only idiom of political commerce and indiscriminate politicalization of religion enjoys social approbation, it will be no wonder if the Sikh extremists mark their time to revive the call for a Sikh Homeland on the plea of protecting Sikh Culture. And from what we know of the history of instinctive Sikh responses to such situations, the Sikhs may cede their reason to sentiment and throw their lot behind the extremists, preferring to side-track the awkward question of 'what, after Homeland ?' In this context, the writer is reminded of the story of Kurd tribals, who had been taught drill by

the British colonial officers for full one year, but it took the former only a split second to break all their disciplined formations and run helter-skelter, when they heard a country minstrel's voice from behind a sand dune, promising musical recital of their fore-father's exploits.

The intimations of religious experience, the affirmation of a cultural value-system, the preservation of a glorious historical tradition, and the continued assertion of an independent status have all come to be inextricably mixed up in the Sikh mind with unshorn hair. Whether a Sikh falls as a result of revolt against formalism or for the fun of fashion, it is regarded by the leaders of the community as a warning to the communal monolith and as a symptom of the crisis of identity. That is why the call of the *Panth*, the community, exercises even now, a great pull on the Sikh mind.

From the preceding account of Sikh responses to the current affairs, it is clear that the onrush of secularism, with all its emphasis on materialism, privatization of religion, rationalism, science and technology has overtaken the Sikh community before its intellectuals have had time to formulate proper ideological answers to it. Presently, they are trying to maintain the community's image of compactness by undertaking *ad hoc* programmes, without coming into clash with the Indian constitution. For example, the elite among the Sikhs are establishing in and out of their Punjabi-speaking State of the Punjab, English-medium Public Schools, in the fond hope of capturing All India competitive jobs and a Bank with Sikh directors is accommodating qualified Sikh young men on its staff, but such programmes are in the nature of lollypops for a community, whose real need is a satisfactory existential adjustment with social reality in a way that its historical identity may remain intact.

The Sikh Mode of Life in the Modern World*

I

Whatever the quality and quantum of evolution that may have occurred in Sikh Mode of Life from Guru Nanak Dev to Guru Gobind Singh and from the latter up to date, the *Gurū Granth Sāhib*, originally compiled by Guru Arjan Dev (1563-1606), remains the normative watershed of the Sikh faith. My first job, therefore, is to understand what the Sikh Mode of Life is, according to *Srī Gurū Granth Sāhib*. This itself is no easy task because the *Granth* is not a text-book of theology or philosophy, nor is it a classified compendium of do's and don'ts for religious novices; it is neither the inventory of an individual's spiritual tensions and their systematic resolution, nor the faithful record of the emotional confrontation of one particular mind with the socio-political realities obtaining at a particular spatio-temporal point. It is, largely, a devotional work of great literary merit. That being so, even the simple task of itemising Sikh doctrines or the preparation of a priority list of the Sikh Code of Conduct, on the basis of the *Granth*, turns out to be a difficult job, especially because the voluminous corpus includes, besides the complete works of the first, second, third, fourth, fifth, and the ninth Gurus, the selections from the works of a number of earlier saints who belonged to religious disciplines that flourished in cultural milieus quite different from the one in which the original compiler himself lived. I, therefore, never rule out the possibility of a

* This paper was read and discussed in the Seminar organised by the Department of Religious Studies, Punjabi University, Patiala on Dec. 3, 1981.

subjective tilt, whenever any one prepares a resume of the essentials of Sikh faith from the *Granth*. In preparing the following resume I have tried to be wary of this possibility.

II

He who claims to be a Sikh has to believe in the existence of a non-physical, omnipresent, omniscient, uncreated Creator, whose will created the whole, vast, and complex phenomenal panorama of the known and unknown cosmos which is circumscribed by a make-believe time-space frame. A dialectic system of push and pull, positive and negative, good and evil, matter and spirit has been devised by the Creator although the nature of the basic ingredient, despite its visible multiplicity, is, like its Creator, non-material and non-multiplistic. This enormous cosmic show is heading for a destined end which may come about centillions of years hence, but happen it must. Homo sapiens are the sum of this creation. They have, within their bodies, a surprisingly large repertoire of such factors as soul, mind, speech, feelings, emotions, reason, imagination, memory, will, ego, libido, which further make among themselves innumerable combinations and permutations. With many undiscovered dimensions in the mazes of his mind and body, each person is like a microcosm moving inside a macrocosm. Within the given physical limitations, man enjoys restricted freedom, but there is no limit to his spiritual growth. So much so, if he learns to keep under his control all the aberrations of his ego, such as excess of sexual and other desires, overflow of temper, undue avarice, attachment, self-aggrandizement, etc., and follows the guidelines of the spiritual teacher, he can not only receive divine intimations, but also hope to win back his original divinity. In order to achieve the desired "metamorphosis of a human being into a deity" (ਮਾਨਸ ਤੇ ਦੇਵਤੇ), an elaborate system of personal and social ethics has been laid down, which insists on dropping money-value in favour of human values. Interestingly, this ethics does not work out to be the ethics of haves or that of the establishment. All Sikhs, irrespective of their clans, professions, or sexes, must get together as often as possible and

sing the praises of the Lord. This helps create a sense of oneness among participants. Wageless and selfless social service, which is a must, provides scope for putting into practice the ideals of humility, equality, and fraternity and keeps one's ego in its proper place. Almost all the contributors of the *Granth* belie the Freudian belief that sex is the basic human propellant; it is ego according to them.

Asserting that the world is transitory and man is mortal, the *Granth* is of the firm opinion that "our world is God's own abode." Addressing Sheikh Farid, whose work he included in his *Granth*, then called *Pothī*, Guru Arjan Dev makes this point further clear, "Do not denigrate this world, O Farid, by calling it a Burning Furnace of Suffering. Don't you see how fascinating our earth is with all the splendour of its colours ? The existence of a few poisonous shrubs in a garden of flowers need not be made an excuse for turning your back on it. After all, what is the spiritual mentor meant for if he does not help people safely past such shrubs ?" It is clear that life on our planet will remain worth living for Sikhs, howsoever trying their circumstances. A Sikh will always try to stick it out. According to one text, "Suicide is like butchering the whole world." In spite of the pervasive cultural influence to the contrary, ninety-nine times out of hundred, a recluse will never be found to be a Sikh. Almost always, a Sikh is a family man engaged in the honest pursuit of work, earning and sharing his profits with others. He is under strict orders not to discriminate between one person and the other on such pretexts as caste, creed, colour, country, or sex. Among the other teachings of the *Granth* are : unflinching faith in the spiritual teacher (The Guru), unruffled and equipoised mind, equation between profession and action, spontaneity in benevolence, cleanliness of mind and body, abstinence from all sorts of intoxicants, aversion to all sorts of dependence, intolerance of injustice, and cultivation of devotional music.

III

Much of the real modernity of our world depends on its scientific and technological achievements and non-theocratic

management of human affairs. As for disconnection of theology from the corridors of governmental authority, its acceptance by the Sikh community may be taken for granted. When Sikhs had the opportunity to run the government of Punjab, with Maharaja Ranjit Singh as head of the State, they began their regal career by slow and steady withdrawal of the state matters from under the theocratic umbrella. The absence of a privileged priestly class in the Sikh scheme of religious organization was a help to this process. By and large, the Indian version of secularism, which amounts to the state being equidistant from all religions, suits the Sikhs provided the distance is strictly equal. If it is discovered by the Sikhs that the ruling agency prefers to treat any one or more religions as more equal than theirs, it may be predicted that there will be trouble. This, however, is a minor question as compared to the real question, which is : Does a Sikh, who pins his faith in the beliefs adumbrated by the Granthian text, find it difficult to hold on to them because of their incompatibility with the new world-view provided by the scientific and technological discoveries and inventions of the post-Granthian era ? This question, like many others, concerns all religions or for that matter the institution of religion itself, but the quality of predicament being different for each religion, the answers may vary from religion to religion. There was a time when religion and sciences were two mutually antagonistic factors, but during the last century, we have seen them veering round to almost complementary positions in many cases.

I have a feeling that there is nothing either in the positive or negative beliefs of the *Granth* that may make Sikhs ill at ease in their modern surroundings. In this connection, reference may be made to a new development in the field of ideas, which it is not possible to ignore, because almost half the people of the world have officially chosen to go the atheistic way, a result of which is that believers, including Sikhs, are finding it difficult to stall the tide of materialism. God is undoubtedly the kingpin of Sikh ideology and all else in the fields of life and death are conceived of as subsidiary products. The founders of believing religions rest content with the assertion that

God is and needs no proof. "Nanak's Lord is visible even to the naked eye (ਨਾਨਕ ਕਾ ਪਾਤਿਸਾਹੁ ਦਿਸੈ ਜਾਹਰਾ—397)," declares the *Granth*. But can the ifs and buts of a modern doubting Thomas be laid at rest even when the declaration is as definitive as the one quoted above and the eye-witness is no less a person than the great Guru Nanak himself? I am afraid the answer is more negative than positive, but that is no reason for Sikhs to disbelieve the testimony of an eye-witness (Guru Nanak Dev) and put faith in the statements of only those scientists who belonged to the category of doubting Thomas or non-believers and not to others like Einstein and Abdus Salam, who with all their eminence and modernity, happen to be confirmed believers? The *Granth's* attitude, which determines the attitude of the Sikhs, is that "Nothing is higher than Absolute Truth; but living it is higher still." (ਸਚਹੁ ਓਹੈ ਸਭੁ ਕੋ ਉਪਰਿ ਸਚੁ ਆਚਾਰੁ—62) That, I believe, is the essence of Sikh life, as enunciated by *Srī Gurū Granth Sāhib* and should hold good for everybody whatever the age that we live in.

IV

No study of the problems arising out of the juxtapositioning of Sikhs in any modern setting can leave out of its purview the form that Guru Gobind Singh gave to the members of his faith. Till his time, the generality of Sikhs were a quietist lot, not easily identifiable by their looks. When they grew in number and began to be noted as a separate entity on the socio-political map of the time, the question of distinguishing them from non-Sikhs naturally came up before the Guru. There was another factor which the Guru wanted to tackle simultaneously. It was the unchecked association of Indian religious devotion with fatalism, inertia, lassitude, and passivity. The Guru did not want the Sikh religious devotion to go the same way, because he knew more than anybody else that activism was an essential element of the faith of which he was the fountain-head. His followers had to be ready to face all challenges, including the ones requiring call to arms. Looking at the steps that the Guru systematically took to achieve his objectives, it is evident that he went

about his business not only as a visionary, but as a practical psychologist who knew the respective roles that faith, ideology, symbology, mythology, literature, music, spectacle, drama, harangue, even slogans and, above all, personal example in valour and sacrifice play when a change in in-built stances is desired. His main concern was religion, not politics; his purpose was to create idealists, who unlike mercenaries, would be ready to lay down their lives in the defence of values, which all the Gurus, from Guru Nanak downwards, had been steadily trying to inculcate and which were enshrined in the Sikh scripture. The Guru was not starting a new religion. Whatever was being done by him was done with the object of continuing, extending, confirming, strengthening, and protecting the religious tradition that he had inherited and not departing from it. This is evident from the fact that he made no change in the Sikh scripture. He did not include even a part of his own work in the *Granth* although he was a poet in his own right. The Sikh ethos has since accepted, without demur, Guru Gobind Singh's dictum that, after him, the *Granth* shall preside over Sikh affairs. Therefore, while considering the formal changes that were introduced by the Guru, it has to be remembered that what may look like the Guru's innovations, were, in fact, his steps to format the essentials of the religion, of which he was then the sole executive head, during his life-time.

V

The formatting steps that Guru Gobind Singh took were primarily aimed at investing the Sikhs with a recognizable identity. Sikhism was to him an independent religion, whose resurgent form, as conceived by him, was to be that of an *amritdhārī Singh*, 'a baptized lion', complete with his unshorn hair and other well-known k's, and oath-bound to a prescribed code of conduct, including such do's as early rising, daily recitation of five prescribed compositions from the *Granth*, setting aside one-tenth of his profits for the welfare of the community and don'ts such as the use of intoxicants, observation of caste, indulgence in corruption, smoking, etc. With

flux of time, this form, which originally only *amritdhārīs* were asked to adopt, became so popular with Sikhs that they adopted it, without undergoing the experience of a formal baptismal ceremony and without binding themselves strictly to the prescribed code of conduct. During Guru Gobind Singh's own time, eminent Sikhs, such as Bhai Nand Lal, chose not to go in for *amrit* and they continued to get as much respect from the Guru and the Sikhs as they used to enjoy earlier, giving an impression that a two-tier membership of Sikhism was imagined—one confined to the fully enrolled, baptised Sikhs and the other to aspirants or *sehjdhārīs* who could in time qualify for full membership. In the pre-partition west Panjab, thousands of shaving Sindhis and Panjabis were *sehjdhārīs*. Those who have visited Pakistan on Gurburbs will testify how Sindhis throng the *Gurdwārās* with a faith which many times puts the Indian Sikhs to shame. But for historical and political reasons, a stage came when unshorn hair became the major identifying symbol of the Sikh faith. He who sports unshorn hair came to be regarded as a Sikh. Unfortunately, no scientifically conducted sociological studies and properly kept numerical records exist, which could show the rise and fall of the hair-graph, but we have some material to show that with the fall of the Sikh empire, the fall in the hair-graph was so alarming that official British estimates allowed only a ten-year lease of life to the organized Sikh faith, but we know how breathtakingly dramatic was the return of the Sikhs to the hair cult after 1873. Such periodic relapses and returns are known to have happened before the rise of Maharaja Ranjit Singh and after the dawn of independence. Let me now formulate only two questions to be clear about the present and, if possible, future situations relating to the Sikh mode of life.

VI

I do not agree with observers from inside the Sikh community and outside that utterly miscalculated and desperate acts of daredevilry during the dark decade of eighties of the last century, have completely drained the Sikh community of all resurging vitality.

I believe that the united *Panthic* will, inspired by faith and history, may still spring a surprise, defying all pessimistic predictions. But such miraculous happenings occur only rarely. That is why it should not be confused with the recent crowd-pulling mega shows arranged in the memory of four-hundredth, three hundredth or any other hundredth anniversaries of important or not-so-important religious occurrences. Such periodic collections of mammoth crowds may serve the electoral ambitions of those who occupy the centre of the stage but do not serve any other useful purpose, certainly not the welfare or the survival of their community. Amalgam of faith and history has always been used by interested parties to arouse the Sikh emotions for various causes but such arousals are poor substitutes for serious closed-door meetings of the best brains of the community to consider such subjects as how to face the new challenges of the modern world.

In the history of religions, the birth and growth of Sikhism under the direct supervision of its Ten Founding Masters is an unprecedented spiritual event, and, therefore, deserves to be saved for the generations to come. Like all religions, with the passage of time, Sikhism also has collected around its valuable original grain, lot of chaff. To make Sikhism acceptable to the modern world, the unwanted chaff has to be shed and beliefs and practices have to be so spruced up that Sikhs do not look out of step with the fast march of science and technology. To be able to do so, the community has to learn to live in the present, in preference to living in the comfort of its past. It has to be realistic and also has to learn to open its eyes and mind to the enormity and novelty of challenges that our fast-changing world is throwing up every day. Does the Sikh community know that the juggernaut of globally uniforming modernity is eating up two complete languages per month! ('The Economist' of London, January 1, 2005, p. 62). This uniforming trend is evident even in our own daily routines of eating, dressing, furnishing, and fashion designing, etc. In short, the ethnic-linguistic minorities are either disappearing or are so adjusting their modes of living, believing and acting that they do not clash with the New World. This is the

stark reality of our times. Either we adjust ourselves to its demands or be ready to be side-tracked. The history of our world is witness to many socio-economic and political systems that affected the modes of people's living but I do not recall an age that gobbled up languages and cultures as fast as our age is doing. Minorities of the world must understand that they are living in a world which is not minority-friendly. When languages, cultures, and life-style are being dumped in the dustbin of history before our very eyes, can religions of minorities be far behind? The juggernaut of our age issues daily warnings to all entities with minority status that they can be complacent at their own risk.

Only 1.9% of Indian population, Sikhs are a miniscule wonder, when considered in the context of their contribution to the defence and economy of India. Their contribution to the economies and cultures of other countries, where they have settled, has been acclaimed by the authorities of those countries. Nevertheless, they remain a very small minority. Theirs was never a proselytising religion like Christianity and Islam. Even during Maharaja Ranjit Singh's rule, not a single soul was forcibly inducted into the Sikh fold. It has, therefore, remained a minority even in its homeland, the Punjab. In the present circumstances I don't visualise voluntary aspirants flocking to the Akāl Takht to seek admission to Sikhism. On the other hand, chances are that the community may find it increasingly difficult to keep its present demographic status-quo intact under the all-pervasive uniforming mood of modernity. The latest figures released by the Census Department of the Government of India confirm my fears. According to the Census Report of 1991-2001 decade, Sikhs were the only religious community in India whose ratio of numerical increase, when compared to all other religious communities, had declined. I have no soothsaying experience but my observation in the field shows that the younger Sikh generation is fast losing interest in the retention of their recognizable identity. If it is not the globally uniforming process at work, what else is it? If the community's antenna does not catch the danger signals now, it may be too late for future generations of Sikhs to retrieve the lost ground.

I recall, with a sense of shame, an English Jew, researching on the world's minorities, telling me at Amritsar in seventies of the last century, that he had interviewed ten topmost Sikh religious and political leaders, intellectuals and High Court judges, besides Vice-Chancellors of Universities in the Punjab put straight questions and discovered that not even one of them had the future of his community on his agenda ! Very sad, indeed. Whether the Sikhs will heed such warnings prominently written on all the walls around them and begin shedding obsolete chaff to let the real grain flourish, only time will tell. But all of us know what is going to happen to rudderless minority communities of the world, if they refuse to face squarely the hard reality with which they are face to face in the modern world.

In spite of its minority status, the possibility of Sikhism enjoying very long life cannot be ruled out but there is a proviso attached to it. It can survive as an independent religion only if it decrusts itself of extraneous doctrinal and social accretions that have been settling upon it for quite some time. I am confident that all the minor and major polluting elements will be identified by the proposed Conclave of Sikh Master-Minds, as and when it meets. However, in anticipation of the Conclave's findings and prescriptions, may I suggest that as early as possible, the community should try to get rid of at least two of its present unsikh features. The first relates to the stratification of society on the pattern outlined in *Manu's Manual*. Sikhism totally rejects Manu's caste system (ਏਕੁ ਪਿਤਾ ਏਕਸ ਕੇ ਹਮ ਬਾਰਿਕ... *Sri Gurū Granth Sāhib*, p. 611) but the unfortunate fact remains that the Sikhs in practice defy their Guru's injunctions and discriminate between man and man on the basis of one's birth. Our world today hates such apartheid in whatever form it is observed. It celebrates human dignity on the basis of equality. The Sikhs must restore original egalitarian character of their religion and save themselves from total rejection by the modern concept of societal behaviour.

The second irritant relates to the penal system adopted by the Sikh religious judiciary. Sikh religious authorities must not forget

that Sikh religion has no unimpeachable codified system of *Shariat* as it exists in Islam and, therefore, must be extremely cautious while issuing their *fatwās* from the Akāl Takht. In fact, I feel strongly that the present constitution of Sikhs' religious judiciary, if it is already there in written form, needs thorough screening and complete overhauling, to make it an absolutely transparent public institution. The present situation cries loudly for change. While *Srī Gurū Granth Sāhib* advocates freedom of thought and expression for genuine researchers (ਖੋਜੀ ਉਪਨੈ ਬਾਦੀ ਬਿਨੈ... *S.G.G.S.*, p. 1225), we have seen scholastically highly qualified Sikhs being penalised and humiliated by community's High Court for their researches based on verified data. While such intellectual gaggings stultify the growth of sound scholarship, it unnecessarily makes the Sikh scholarship butts of ridicule at provincial, national and international fora.

At present the Sikhs are not only violating the tenets of their own religion by observing caste system and punishing genuine researchers but are also effectively blocking their own emergence as one of the simplest among religions of the modern world. Physically existing in the present age while actually living in the medieval, is not acceptable to our contemporary world. If Sikhs insist that they would like to live with their present dichotomy between faith and practice, it should be clear to them that it would be very hard for the people of the modern world to accept them at their face value. Change in life-style is a must for every community to survive. I am absolutely clear that by refusing to translate the original Sikh concept of egalitarianism into practice, they will be treading a path that will ultimately lead them to a mortuary.

In the end, I should share with you my premonition that the ruthlessly malevolent rat-race for acquisition of unbridled power and total control of the world's productive resources, is not going to last for ever. Life and nature will combine to bring these mad enemies of humanity to their knees and ultimately a wind will blow in which benevolent science and technology will like to co-exist with peace-loving and eco-friendly spirituality. It will be then that a religion, such as pure Sikhism, will be able to flourish. Will Sikhs like to gird

up their loins for such a pleasant future or stick to the *Manu Smriti's* code of social classification with minds closed to the current lifestyles ? In the long run, the latter option, whether they like it or not, will mean slow disappearance of their distinct independent existence from the globe. Don't the Sikhs know that the vast ocean of Manu's followers, surging around them, will welcome their absorption in it, as it did in the case of Buddhists, Jains, and a host of other religious communities who were once proud of their distinct identities ?

Bhagat Puran Singh*

Even after his death on August 5 in 1992, Bhagat Puran Singh continues to be a living legend in Punjab. He is a modern incarnation of Bhai Kanahayya, the father of *Sewā Panthī* Movement, the Indian precursor of Red Cross Movement. Bhai Kanhayya was a Sikh of Guru Tegh Bahadur, who outlived his Guru, and joined the entourage of Guru Gobind Singh. The Bhai took upon himself the duty of providing clean drinking water to the Guru's camp. In one of the Sikh-Mughal skirmishes, he was found offering water to the injured personnel of the enemy along with the Sikh soldiers. The Sikhs who did not like him to go on reviving their enemies brought him to the Guru for suitable punishment. The Guru not only blessed him for his true perception of the Sikh religion but also gifted to him a tin of antiseptic ointment which could be effectively used for the benefit to those who needed it, irrespective of the fact whether the person was a Sikh soldier or an enemy soldier. Since then, the *Sewā Panthī* Sikhs have been known for the catholic nature of their humanitarian services which transcend all barriers of colour, caste, creed, and country.

Bhagat Puran Singh, though never formally enrolled as a member of the *Sewā Panth*, enshrined in himself the spiritual and moral values which Bhai Kanhayya represented under the inspiration and guidance of his Guru, Gobind Singh. Any unscheduled visit to his Pingalwārā (The House of the Handicapped) established by the Bhagat near the main bus stand in Amritsar, will show how the compassionate soul of this saintly person has spread its protective wings over hundreds of incurables, the physically handicapped, the

* First published in *Advance*, Sept. 1986, Chandigarh, Vol. XXXV, No. 9.

mentally retarded, the completely deranged, the derelicts, and the forsakens. Any man, woman, or child, coming from any part of the country whom society has thrown out of the pale of even its fringes, is sure to find in him a welcoming godfather. For him, a patient is a human being, pure and simple, in immediate need of redress; he is never a Sikh, Hīndu, or Muslim; Brahmin, Vaish, or Shudra; Indian, Pakistani, or Sri Lankan; man, woman, or child. When I asked him once about the religion-wise distribution of inmates of his Piṅgalwārā, he said, "I have never cared to work it out that way, but, may be, more than 90 per cent of them are Hindus."

"And what about the religion-wise distribution of the contributors of the Rs. 40 lac annual budget of your Piṅgalwārā?"

"May be, 90 per cent or more among the contributors are Sikhs, but I have never cared to find the exact percentage, religion-wise."

Bhagatji used to go about seeking shelterless, succourless people for care. He reached them wherever they were. In fact, that is how he started his career of service in Lahore. He picked up a polio-stricken child from somewhere and for the next 14 long years, a long, lanky, poorly-dressed person moving about in the streets, with a growing child seated on his neck, became a familiar scene for the denizens of Lahore. Since then, the situation has changed tremendously. His patients are now provided with better perches than their benefactor's neck. The wards of the spacious, double-storeyed Piṅgalwārā overflow with patients whom he provides, besides free residential accommodation, electricity and water, free food and clothing. In the case of most of the inmates, the winter beddings and woollens are also provided by him. Presently out of more than 300 inmates of the Piṅgalwārā, over 125 are mentally deranged women and six unclaimed newly born babies. The numbers may vary but the quality of service continues unabated.

The Bhagat remained a bachelor. His choice to remain single has been deliberate because he found his favourite job to be totally absorbing and time-consuming. He decided not to allow the domestic complications of marital life to stand in the way of his own unusual commitments.

“Who was responsible for driving you to this life of a roving mendicant ?,” I asked him out of curiosity.

“God Himself,” he said and continued thus, “Born as Ramji Das, in a rich money-lending Hindu family of village Rajewal, Tehsil Samrala, District Ludhiana, I was to experience, quite early in life, extreme penury after the business of my father collapsed. I managed to study up to matriculation, but my mother had to clean utensils and wash dirty linen of other people to enable me to pay my fees. Once, while going to my village on foot, I was forced to spend a night in a temple which I clean-swept and washed, but when it was eating time, the custodians of the temple took their food without bothering to share even their leavings with me, although they knew that I would have to go to sleep without any food at all. As luck would have it, I had to spend another night in similar circumstances at a rural wayside *Gurdwārā*. I was a stranger for these people and I did not belong to their religion, but I was served, along with others, a sumptuous fare, which ended with a glass of milk. This contrast in the life-styles of the two sets of people living in their respective places of worship planted in my young heart the seeds of Sikh faith, social service, humanitarianism, and self-sacrifice. My contact with the Head Granthī of Guru Arjan’s Dera Sahib Gurdwārā at Lahore, Bhai Teja Singh by name, confirmed my decision to dedicate my whole life to the most satisfying of avocations in the world-alleviation of human suffering, howsoever small the measure of one’s contribution; I have swept the excreta of patients with my own hands and I do so even now; I have picked up banana and other fruit skins from the roads and do so even now; I have carried mud and bricks on my head for the upcoming buildings of Piṅgalwārā and am ready to do so even now when I am running my 82nd year; I have begged food for the inmates from door to door and do so even now; I sit outside the Golden Temple and other *Gurdwārās* like a beggar in sun and rain and collect money for my *Āshram*. I do not feel ashamed for all this. In fact, affection and respect is what I get in return. I have no personal demands but my demands for Piṅgalwārā are unendingly enormous. Perhaps you do not know that a sizeable

chunk of my time is taken away by my other activity relating to the circulation of literature to bring social awareness among our people and that requires money which I collect from the public. My demands, howsoever heavy, have always been met generously because people are confident that behind my craze of collection lies an unselfish and noble cause. Mine has been a full and meaningful life—a Guru-directed Godward Journey, through the service of humanity at large.”

Meeting the Bhagat is always an instructive experience. Full of energy and ideas culled from books and newspapers, he has a socially relevant advice for everyone. “Plant trees, do not cut them,” and then follows an informed lecture on the economic and ecological advantages of trees. “Always travel by train and avoid bus travel,” and then he goes on to tell you how deleterious to health the Carbon Monoxide exhausts are and paints an alarming picture of the steeply mounting toll of human lives in road accidents. “Beware of the impending doom of our beautiful world by nuclear and other arms,” and then you hear from him a hair-raising description of the devastating prowess of the malignant fission of atomic nucleus. “Produce less children”, “Do not throw fruit skins on the road,” and the lists of such Do’s and Don’ts goes on and on. Bhagat Puran Singh remained a voracious reader. He employed three readers to provide him with cuttings of socially useful and informative writings from national newspapers and journals and reproduced them on any sort of paper in his own press in the form of handbills, booklets, pamphlets, etc., for free distribution. Books published by him, such as the biographies of Guru Nanak and Guru Gobind Singh and the English translation of the *Jap(u)* of Guru Nanak, all by Professor Narain Singh and a number of them covering as many as 500 pages, are distributed free, although the amount spent on publishing them runs into lacs of rupees. “Money comes to me in dribbles from my people. I give it back to them in the form of character-building and nation-building literature,” explained Bhagat Puran Singh, in justification of this expenditure.

It is impossible to sum up a multi-dimensional institution like Bhagat Puran Singh in one introductory article like the present one.

Had the Bhagat been a little more exposed to the modern standards of cleanliness and business management and had the information media of our country been a little more sympathetically exposed to the humanitarian achievements of our own people, there is no reason why Bhagat Puran Singh's name should not have been the common property of the world, like Mother Teresa's. On our part, let it be late than never !

Consciousness of Sikh Identity*

On the 27th of this month, we had a bird's eye-view of the literature that the Sikh community has been able to produce during the last five hundred years. Today we shall have a look at the dynamics of the evolving Sikh community and the self-images that it developed at various points in its history. I hope I shall be allowed to benefit by the large-heartedness of the members of this august assembly, as and when I appear to cover an already-covered ground. Despite conscious effort to avoid this eventuality, some repetition may be inevitable as we have to pass through the same five hundred years of the same community all over again.

As the learned Faculty already knows, members of the Sikh Community carry their badge of identity so naturally and so prominently on their persons that it is not difficult to identify them even in a crowd. Apostates apart, it is never very easy for a Sikh to conceal the fact of his being a Sikh even when there is danger to his life. The Sikh has been carrying his hirsute and turbanned identity on his person since 1699 when Guru Gobind Singh, the tenth Guru, introduced his new baptismal ceremony in which the 'nectar' stirred with a double-edged sword is served provided the novice promises to abide strictly by certain conditions. One obligatory condition is that the natural growth of body hair is not to be interfered with. This is no occasion to recount all the interpretations of the hair-symbol, adumbrated by Sikh and non-Sikh scholars, but I certainly feel like narrating a popular explanation

* This paper, written on the invitation of South Asian Institute of University of Heidelberg, West Germany, was presented and discussed on 28.6.1985 in the Institute.

available in almost all books on the subject. It tries to unfold the rationale underlying the Guru's command.

When Guru Tegh Bahadur, Guru Gobind Singh's father and ninth Guru of the Sikhs, was made a captive and was being pressurized to embrace Islam, three of his companions were tortured to death to break his will—Bhai Mati Das was sawn alive, Bhai Dila was boiled alive, and Bhai Sati Das was put to the sword. When the Guru did not relent, he was beheaded in the main market-place of Delhi and his severed head and body were left there, like the bodies of his Sikhs, to be defiled by dogs and vultures. Stunned with fear, no Delhi Sikh came forward to claim the Guru's body, although their number in Delhi at that time was not negligible. A sudden storm, which is said to have enveloped Delhi with darkness, provided excellent opportunity to a Sikh pedlar who took away the body under cover of darkness to his own residence, only a few miles from the bloody scene. He set his house ablaze, as he did not regard it expedient to arrange a formal cremation for the body. The Guru's head was similarly picked up by a Sikh sweeper who carried it post-haste to Anandpur where the Guru's son and successor was then residing. The Sikh, while presenting the head to the nine-year old Guru, gave a graphic account of the paralyzing terror that had struck every one, including the Sikhs, who had disappeared from the public view for fear of implication. It was there and then that the young Guru pledged to see that no Sikh in future would be able to hide his identity, howsoever fearsome the circumstances. And this promise he fulfilled when deciding to create from the old 'Sikh' human material, the new 'Singh' (Lion) category of men; he made *kes*, uncut hair, the first mark of identification of his followers.

From statements ascribed to Guru Gobind Singh and from his actions and the statements of others available in the contemporary or near-contemporary literature, it is evident that the Guru was trying to make the separate existence of the Sikh community and its faith more distinct than before. His purpose was to highlight the independent nature of Sikhism in the context of other contemporary religions. By doing this, he wanted to ensure the desired quality of

the individual and collective conduct of his 'Khalsa', the new name for his Sikhs. His insistence on a distinct and unadulterated Khalsa can be understood as the wish of a creator who desires to guard his creation against all vulgarization. I quote from a recent publication :

Guru Gobind Singh had actually warned the Sikh people not to let the purity of the Sikh faith and the distinctiveness of the Khalsa Panth be confused, particularly in view of the closeness of Sikhism to Hinduism, thus : 'as long as the Khalsa Panth retaineth the distinctiveness of its ideals, I will bless it with power and glory. But when it follows the way of the Brahmins (Castes, etc.), I will not trust it.'¹

Circumstantial evidence provides the key to the Guru's extreme mistrust of Brahminism, so evident in the quotation cited just now. When Guru Gobind Singh took charge of the community, the boundary line between Sikhs and Hindus seemed to have become a little blurred. The following incident occurs in *Sri Gur Sobhā* by Sainapati, a devout Sikh, close to the Guru. His book was completed only two years after the demise of the Guru. The children of a deceased Delhi Sikh did not shave off their hair as they had accepted the new deal of Guru Gobind Singh. The Hindu custom required close cropping of the head at such occasions. The non-croppers were subjected to severe social boycott and a general strike was observed by Delhi shopkeepers to protest against the violation of tradition and custom. Such segregation of the newly-baptized Khalsa by non-baptized Sikhs shows that prior to the New Deal, some Sikhs were also observing traditional Hindu religious customs probably because they were allowed to graduate to Sikhism at a steady pace. Whatever the reason, the prevalence of such a situation is confirmed by an equally reliable authority of earlier date. The author of *Dabistān-i-Mazāhib*, who personally knew Guru Hargobind and Guru Har Rai, the Sixth and Seventh Gurus respectively, narrates one of his experiences thus :

...Sādh is one of the disciples of the Guru... once the author

1. Narain Singh, *Roots of Hindu Sikh Unity*, 1979, Amritsar, All India Pingalwārā Society, Amritsar, 1979, p. 14.

was his companion from Kabul to Punjab. The belt of my skin-coat snapped. Sādh instantly took off his brahminical thread and patched the belt with it. I said, 'why did you do like this?' He replied, 'The wearing of the thread is an undertaking of service. When I neglect the service of friends, I become non-wearer of thread...'²

While such references may lead to the conclusion that the social tiers between Hindus and Sikhs were closely demarcated during the early period, there are other pertinent questions that raise their heads : Did Guru Nanak found a new religion at all ? Did he conceive his 'Path' to be distinct from the other prevalent Paths ? What perception did the successive Gurus and Nanakpanthīs (as the early Sikhs were called) had about themselves and their Nanakism ? How did others regard them ? These are some of the basic questions, satisfactory answers to which can help us understand at least some parameters of the problem that forms the subject of today's talk.

I have not been able to find in the works of Guru Nanak any categorical declaration to the effect that he was laying or had laid the foundation of a new community or a new religion. Such a declaration would have solved the problem once for all. Nowhere does he state that he is preparing a charter of Do's and Don'ts for the converts coming into the fold of Nanakism or *Gurmat*, although there are any number of such instructions for Man in general in his works. Such a situation leaves scope for inferences and interpretations wide open. One has to depend on the supporting evidence of history and tradition to arrive at the correct conclusions. There is no denying the fact that the Guru does not give his unqualified approval to any religion or religious denomination or sect in his work. Critical, even denunciatory references to the beliefs, customs, life-styles and practices of almost all the prevalent religions, religious orders, cults, and professional cadres are there, but these can hardly be adduced as definitive evidence in favour of our requirement. Such criticism can certainly be expected from an outsider, but surely, it may come

2. Ganda Singh, "Nanak Panthies" (from *Dabistān-i-Mazāhib*) in *Punjab Past and Present*, April 1967, Patiala, Punjabi University, p. 69.

from an insider too. However, there are a few other pointers which must be carefully examined. For example, the literature, produced within less than a century after his death, mentions the setting up by him of congregations of his followers (*saṅgat*) in all places visited by him. The very fact that he enrolled followers and knit them together is an indication that he was thinking in terms of a community of like-minded people. His practical experiment of community life at Kartarpur, where he spent the last phase of his life, seems to be the culmination of a life-long thought-process. Another pointer is the institution by him of the office of Guruship. He passed on to his follower, Bhai Lehṇā, in a formal ceremony, the office of Guruship, conferred upon the Guru-designate a new name, Angad (an ornament), and allowed the latter to use Nanak as his pseudonym in his poetry. Moreover, he is believed to have passed on the manuscript of his own works to his successor. All these steps point to a premeditated long-range programme. Throughout his work, Guru Nanak had underscored the necessity of a Guru for any success in spiritual life. In fact, the world-view of his theology was incomplete without the Guru. This life-long emphasis on the Guru ensured for his successors the complete allegiance of his Sikhs. Looking back at his life and work from this stand-point, it is possible to recall certain other items also, which may have formed part of his community-forming programme. For example, the free common kitchen (*laṅgar*), the rejection of the whole value-system based on considerations of caste and unambiguous policy statements on various political, administrative, judicial, social, economic, and, of course, ethical, philosophical, and religious situations.

Sikh scholars often point out that each successor of Guru Nanak made some major contribution to the evolving personality of Nankism till it received its final shape from Guru Gobind Singh. In other words, it was not Guru Nanak alone who was the founder of Sikhism, but all the Gurus combined deserve this honour. This is, for instance, how the late Prof. Teja Singh, presents this case while introducing his booklet, *The Growth of Responsibility in Sikhism* :

The Sikh is essentially a disciple. His religion, therefore, is best

understood when we regard it as a life, a discipline and not a history or philosophy. Most students of Sikhism...make invidious distinctions about the conduct of different Gurus. Some they regard as peaceful, others worldly and contentious... These doubts and difficulties will be removed if we carefully study the whole range of Sikh history as revealing the gradual making and development of a nation in the hands of its ten successive leaders.³

Towards this end, Guru Nanak brought, according to the Professor, Renaissance or General Enlightenment, Guru Angad stressed Obedience, Guru Amar Das insisted on Equality, Guru Ram Das's favourite theme was Service, Guru Arjan introduced Self-Sacrifice, Guru Hargobind's contribution was Justice, Guru Har Rai tempered it with Mercy, Guru Hari Krishan made his Sikhs learn how to elect a Leader, and Guru Tegh Bahadur taught the lesson of Coolness of Judgement. It was left to Guru Gobind Singh to complete the process of nation-building by passing on full responsibility to the Sikh people.

Prof. Singh's theory upholds the operation of evolutionary processes on Sikh institutions and, in a way, tries to explain what the Sikh concept of all the ten Guru's being 'One and the Same Light' (*jjyoti*) means in the modern idiom. Whether the idiom is old or new, the basic concern in both cases remains the same, namely, that the integrated personality of the *panth* or the community must not be allowed to disintegrate. The plain fact is that no person sympathetic to the Sikh cause, much less a Sikh, would have allowed that to happen when Guru Amar Das, the second successor of Guru Nanak, had already given the following glowing tribute to the Religio-Philosophical School of Guru Nanak in *Rāga Āsā* :

Fortunate are they who profess God's Religion. It cometh to them by becoming truly detached, through the Guru's Word. The six Hindu Schools are prevalent today but the Guru's School is unparalleled.⁴

3. Teja Singh, *The Growth of Responsibility in Sikhism*, 1983, 10th ed., Amritsar, (S.G.P.C.), Amritsar, 1983.

4. Translation by Narain Singh, *op.cit.*, p. 15.

Bhai Gurdas's hind-sight makes him see Guru Nanak's work as follows (Bhai Gurdas was a contemporary of the fourth, fifth and sixth Gurus) : "Guru Nanak struck his own currency in this world when he started his new unadulterated *pañth*" (1.45). Elsewhere, in his *Vārs* (Odes), he refers to Guru Nanak as having founded the "Guru-Oriented *pañth*" (24.2).

From the preceding evidence, I conclude that Guru Nanak did conceive of, and did establish, a distinct community with its own moral code, social constructs, religious beliefs, and its own programme of a Sikh's daily life. It is a common observation that voluntary conversion is followed by some changes in the life-style of the convert. We can mark such a thing happening in the case of Sikhs. For example, the early Sikhs developed their own greetings,⁵ they had their own ceremony for initiation (footwash of the Guru); they left their *varṇasramadharmā* behind and sat together with others at eating time; they had their own prayers and *mantras* for constant and occasional repetition and, above all, had their own Guru in whom they had blind faith. But I am not sure whether all members of the new community were asked to effect a total break with traditional ceremonies performed on special occasions, such as births, marriages, and deaths. The case is comparable to non-believing Marxists, born in Sikh families, who abrogate and denounce religion vehemently, but follow the current Sikh religious ceremonies prescribed for such formal occasions as births, marriages, and deaths. Some such social vestiges, including the sacred thread ceremony and the head-cropping ceremony, may have continued among the Sikhs also. With the passage of time, that portion of the community, whose loyalty to orthodox form had not been given a violent jolt at the time of their enrolment, became decreasingly responsive to the increasingly resistive programme that the Sikh community was later called upon to adopt. They preferred to remain statically content with a layer of Nanakism that had been added to their Hinduism, while the live part of the Sikh community went on

5. Piar Singh, "The Sikh Salutation" in *Journal of Sikh Studies*, Feb. 1974, Amritsar, Guru Nanak Dev University.

shedding steadily the remaining customs of the old socio-religious system. The formation of Guru Gobind Singh's Khalsa was a decisive attack by the no-compromisers on the compromisers who were fond of blurred frontiers.

The interesting fact that has to be noted is that whenever there has been a spurt of resurgence during the post-Guru Gobind Singh period of Sikh history, it has turned out to be a renewed effort on the part of Sikhs to purge the community of Brahminical influences, whose infiltrating capacity is well-known, especially in the cases of religions of Indian origin, because some of their theological vocables and concepts happen to overlap. Generally speaking, the socio-psychological differences among Muslims and Sikhs were so marked during the medieval period that the Sikhs had no fear of wholesale absorption from that side, but there was so much social kinship between Hindus and Sikhs that the Sikh minority often felt the threat of submersion in the religious majority. Even today, any one who cuts off his hair is automatically considered to have relapsed into the Hindu mass. It is in this context that repeated attempts of the Sikh community at self-preservation or self-assertion, whatever one may call these, have to be understood. I am referring to such protestant movements among the Sikhs as the *Nirāṅkāri* Movement of Baba Dayal (1783-1855), the *Nāmdhārī* Movement of Baba Ram Singh (1815-1885), the *Singh Sabha* Movement (1873), and the *Gurdwārā* Reform or *Akali* Movement (1920-25).

We have already seen that by the time of the second successor of Guru Nanak Dev, who was only ten years younger to the first Guru, the consciousness of the Sikh religious philosophy being different from other religious philosophies was already at work. Meanwhile, the numerical strength of the community was increasing steadily and Guru Amar Das is reported to have appointed 22 of his nominees in various administrative divisions of the State. His successor, Guru Ram Das, founded Amritsar (The Pool of Nectar), around which has grown up the city of the same name and which has since served as the religious capital of the Sikh people. Guru Arjan Dev induced his Sikhs to contribute 10% of their income

towards the welfare of the community, founded the Harimandir, the famous Golden Temple in the centre of the 'Pool of Nectar', and compiled the '*Pothi*' which was to serve as the future Scripture of the Sikhs. All these steps were clearly directed towards strengthening the claim of independent religious status for the new community. Jehangir, the Mughal emperor, while giving reasons for having ordered Guru Arjan's death by torture, states in his *Autobiography* (*Tuzak*) :

In Goindwal, which is situated on the bank of the river Biyah (Beas), there was a Hindu named Arjan, in the garb of *pīr* and Shaikh, so much so that having captivated many simple-hearted Hindus, nay even foolish and stupid Muslims, by his ways and manners, he had noised himself about as a religious and worldly leader. They called him Guru, and from all directions fools and fool-worshippers were attracted towards him and expressed full faith in him. For three or four generations they had kept this shop warm...⁶

Jahangir's statement is that of an adversary, but it puts on record the fact that Hindus, and to some extent Muslims also, rushed to the Sikh 'shop', which was obviously different from other 'shops'. Undoubtedly, Sikhism had become a full-fledged entity by that time but it cannot be vouchsafed with the same certainty that their identity was also equally clearly established. At least to me, history is not articulate on this point. It should be interesting to find out what the Sikhs thought of themselves at that point of time. Fortunately, there is much material in the *Vārs* of Bhai Gurdas on this point. The self-image of an ideal Sikh turns out to be like this :

He gets up quite early in the morning; takes his daily bath; recites every morning and evening the prescribed texts; goes without fail to the *gurdwārā* to listen to the *kīrtan* (choir) and to have the benefit of the company of other Sikhs gathered there (*sāngat*), keeps his mind attuned to the Guru's *sabad*, spares time to scribe the works of the Guru; works hard in his socially useful avocation; lives a house-holder's life with only

6. Ganda Singh (ed.), *op.cit.*

one wife; does not eat or sleep too much; treats all Sikhs as his brethren; gives unstinted, unconditional and unquestioning loyalty to the Guru and obeys all his commands like a slave; does not steal another's property; is sweet to everybody; is not a braggart but behaves humbly and is ready to fall at the feet of everyday; is spiritually and intellectually enlightened and does not believe in superstitions and caste restrictions.

This image is not that of a knight-errant ready to unsheathe his sword even at the slightest of issues, or that of a guerrilla fighting for a place in the sun so that the culture which he represents may live without let or hindrance. It is, at best, the image of a puritan whose strength lies in his goodness and sweetness. He wants to see conditions prevail wherein he would get opportunities to get closer to the other members of his community. He knows that discipline, development of close relations with other Sikhs, complete surrender to the will of the leader, and good relations with other members of society alone will guarantee safety to him and his community in the regime in which he is living.

But if we compare this image with the tone and temper of Guru Gobind Singh, we find a world of difference. The language suddenly begins to exude self-confidence and self-reliance (*bhārī bhujān ko bhārī bharoso* : one can always depend heavily on muscular arms) and shows unflinching faith in ultimate victory (*nischai kar apani jīt karaun* : It is positive that I am going to win). Guru Arjan died in 1606 and Guru Gobind Singh in 1708. Within one century, the psychological atmosphere had undergone a sea change. "I am under the protection of the Supreme Lord; no searing hot wind can ever harm me," sang Guru Arjan. "Grant me this prayer, O Lord ! that I should die fighting in the thick of battle," says Guru Gobind Singh. Basically Guru Arjan and Guru Gobind Singh were both saints, but they were also soldiers of their faith; both of them were very brave persons; both wanted a change for the better in society; both were leaders of men in their own right and commanded full confidence of their followers, but while one used passive resistance to establish and strengthen the entity of his faith, the other took up arms in the

defence of the entity and identity of the same faith. The Sikh intellectuals, as already indicated, regard this development as the natural culmination of a designed process, but Dr. McLeod traces it to the bulk conversion of the Jat tribes to Sikhism. I regard these views as complementary and not mutually exclusive, in view of the great concern for honour already visible in Guru Nanak's work.

The influx of converts that had been increasing from Guru to Guru received a fillip during Guru Gobind Singh's time because the Guru was able to bestow on Sikh entity a cognizable identity. To be the member of a forward-looking minority, during perilous times, became an adventure as well as a challenge, and both these suited the temper of the Punjabi people. At one place in the *Dasam Granth*, Guru Gobind Singh has acknowledged, in very touching words, the contribution that his Sikhs, the Khalsa, had made towards his achievements :

All my victories in battle I owe to them. It is through their favour that I have been gifting away money.

It is they who have purged me clean of all my weakness, and it is on their account that my house is again brimming with plenty.

It is through their courtesy that I got my education, and it is through their kindness that all my enemies have perished.

They alone are responsible for making me what I am now, otherwise millions of people like me are rotting everywhere.⁷

This must have come as a shot in the arm of the Khalsa who, under Banda Singh, subjugated a part of Mughal territory and declared independence within just two years after Guru Gobind Singh's demise. The flush of victory proved to be short-lived and hell was let loose on the Sikhs. The indiscriminate indulgence of the Government in horrible acts of violence brought out the best that one could hope for in Sikh character : unity, courage, defiance, and sacrifice—the preservation of their individual and corporate identity becoming their sole concern. The Sikhs, hiding themselves in the forests, deserts, and submountainous regions of the Punjab, invented

7. *Dasam Pātsāhī kī Gurū Granth Sāhib*, 1895, Lahore, Anglo-Sanskrit Press, p. 645.

a boastful terminology to overcome feelings of deprivation and dispossession. This linguistic by-product is an interesting field of study for psychologists interested in keeping up the morale of their people in times of distress. The ill-clad, half-starved Sikhs, outlaws in their own homeland, kept their spirits high by indulging in the playful pastime of adding very interesting new semantic dimensions to the existing vocabulary. Just to give a taste of the humour-provoking self-deception indulged in by these guerrilla fighters, I quote a few specimens :

'Parched Grams' were renamed as 'almonds'; 'brinjals' were changed into 'partridges'; the 'poppy plant' turned into 'Shah Jahan'; the putrid water of the village pond got converted into 'Sardāi' (a sweet drink made of almonds and poppy-seed paste); '1,25,000' was their euphemism for 'one'; a simple 'cart' got converted into a 'ship'; their 'glass-palace', on examination, would turn out to be 'a ramshackle hut'; 'to fix the salary of somebody' meant 'imposing a fine on somebody'; 'living in a green house' meant 'living under a tree'; 'putting one's girdle around one's waist', or 'shouting the victory slogan', or 'invading (the citadel)', amounted to 'breathing one's last' and 'enjoying a ride on the back of a police officer' meant, 'riding a donkey'. If an armed guerrilla were to go to a village chief and announce in a loud voice : "An army of one hundred thousand and a quarter of soldiers have arrived to collect one hundred thousand and a quarter of rupees as tax due from you," that would only mean, "Could you please spare a rupee for me?" And when the chief did spare the rupee, the guerrilla would not stretch his hand to get it from the giver, he would pick it from, better still, snatch it from his palm, symbolizing that he was getting this amount not as alms but as a matter of right.

Such was the incidental product of the Resistance Movement that the Sikhs had started for self-preservation. Muinul-Mulk, the Governor of Lahore for some time, was responsible for the extermination of a large number of Sikhs. He was contemptuously

nicknamed "Mir Mannu" by the Sikhs. A couplet coined at that time got proverbial currency among the Sikhs :

"Mannu is our sickle and we are like Mannu's anethum (*sowā* plant). The more he mows us down, the more we grow."

During his seventh invasion of the Punjab in 1764, Ahmad Shah Durrani was accompanied by the ruler of Kalat, Mir Nasir Khan, who had brought with him his historian, Qazi Nur Muhammad, who wrote in Persian verse an eye-witness account of the expedition which was undertaken with the sole intention of extirpating the Sikhs. In his *Jaṅg Nāmāh* (1765), the Qazi showers all sorts of abuses on the Sikhs, but speaks highly of their fighting skill. This image of the Sikhs being already established, I refrain from quoting him on this subject, but there are a few of his verses in which he refers to the moral character of his adversaries. These I quote here because of the unexpected quarter from which the Sikh image gets a projection :

Leaving aside their mode of fighting, hear you another point in which they excel all other fighting people.

In no case would they slay a coward or put any obstacle in the way of the fugitive.

They do not plunder the wealth and ornaments of a woman, be she a well-to-do lady, or a maid-servant.

There is no adultery amongst these dogs, nor are these mischievous people given to thieving.

Whether a woman is young or old, they call her a *budhiā*, an old lady, and ask her to get out of the way.

The word *budhiā* in the Indian language means an old lady.

There is no thief at all among these dogs, nor is there any house-breaker born among these miscreants ... ⁸.

When inveterate enemies speak so highly of a people's physical and moral excellence, the possibility of their developing an inflated self-image cannot be ruled out. I am afraid, to some extent, this has happened in the case of Sikhs also. They had to nurse the spirit of

8. Ganda Singh (ed.), *Nur Mohammad's Jaṅg Nāmāh*, 1939, Amritsar, Khalsa College, p. 6., note 1.

defiance against injustice or invidious distinction for so long during the periods of the Later Mughals, Nadir Shah, and Ahmad Shah Durrani that, slowly and steadily, defiance against injustice became a part of the Sikh ethos. The Sikhs did come to think that man to man, they were superior to others at least at the physical level. The euphemism of one Sikh being equivalent to a whole army of one hundred thousand and a quarter, embedded itself so deeply in the Sikh psyche that even when they had been reduced to slavery during the British period, they tried to hang on desperately to this image. To be fair to them, when their period of persecution was over in the 18th century and they leapt on to the saddle of authority, their victorious career was, as compared to their numbers, quite glorious and would have filled anybody's heart with pride. But feudal victories in the name of religion, without matching advances in socio-political field, end in ideological miscarriages. This is what happened with the Sikhs when they had to face defeat and humiliation at the hands of the British. Punjab was annexed in 1849. In the Punjab Administrative Report for the year 1851-52, we come across the following assessment by the reporting authority :

The Sikh faith and ecclesiastical polity is rapidly going where the Sikh political ascendancy has already gone...

The Administrative Report for the year 1855-56 sees on change in the previous position :

The Sikhs tribe is losing its members rapidly... I have already quoted elsewhere what Babu Kesab Candra Sen of his Brahmo Samaj of Lahore had said in a lecture in 1873. I seek your kind permission to reproduce it here : "Due to the hard work of Guru Nanak, numerous people of the Punjab had put and proclaimed their faith in one god, but now Sikhs and idol-worshippers have become one... Sikh *dharma* had emerged from Hinduism, and now it is the same Hindu *dharma* gobbling it up..."

Sikhs could salvage themselves from a situation such as this only by removing their ideological stagnation and by shaking off the un-Sikh moss which had gathered around their pristine shine, but

the loss of an empire, with which they had emotionally identified themselves, overwhelmed their initiative. The prop which seemed to sustain the Sikh illusion of invincibility had suddenly disappeared. Increase in numbers due to forced conversion had come to the rescue of some religions in surviving such situations. But Sikhs had never resorted to the policy of force in matters religious, even in the days of their ascendancy. Ranjit Singh had appeared on the political scene at a time when nation-states were coming into being, but Ranjit Singh's inability to choose decisively between a Sikh National state and a Punjabi National state caused the death of both in premature embryos when they had to face an alien victor. The dazed Sikhs, therefore, lay scattered and disorganized after losing political power. So, when the British offered employment to the Sikhs in their army, they jumped at the offer gratefully and bartered away their loyalty with their security. Incidentally, a successful career in the army alone could have repaired the broken self-image of a vanquished martial people. The Sikhs proved to be excellent mercenaries. They got full-throated praise from their masters for being the best soldiers in the world, which they probably were.

The British officers could be depended upon to press into service every religious device that would confirm or maximize the loyalty of their subjects for them. Sikhs were no exception to this rule. In the British Army, they were asked to get themselves baptized according to their prescribed religious practice. Every Sikh soldier had to conform rigidly to the Sikh form. They were required to pledge their loyalty to their employers in the presence of their Scripture. The Sikh feudal chiefs, big landlords, and religious functionaries of important shrines having been already won over, and with external Sikh identity absolutely intact in the British Army, some Sikhs began to look upon the British masters as their saviours. This illusion was so strong that it did not dissolve when Dalip Singh, Maharaja Ranjit Singh's gutless son, called upon his co-religionists in 1885-86 to help him regain his throne; it did not break when Ajit Singh and his companions tried to bolster agrarian unrest in 1907; it could not be broken even by the Ghadarites (mostly

revolutionary Punjabi Sikhs settled in the U.S.A and Canada) gave a call to their brethren in the Punjab and elsewhere to throw off the yoke of slavery. The illusion broke only when the Sikhs realized to their dismay that the British policy of keeping the Sikh places of worship under their control was an essential part of the overall British strategy to ensure Sikh subservience. The immediate Sikh response was that of defiance. The Sikh masses responded gloriously to the Akali call for protesters. The chapters written by non-violent protesters in their blood at Bābey-Dī-Ber, Sialkot (1920), Nankana Sahib (1921), Guru Ka Bagh and Gangsar (1922-23), and Jaito (1924) form a resplendent.

(Editor's Note : The original copy of Pritam Singh's article together with other important papers was destroyed when a fire caused by an electrical short-circuit broke out in his home. Unfortunately, a new version was not received in time for publication. The present article has been copied from an incomplete manuscript, which had been left at South Asia Institute. It has been published with the author's permission.)

Bibliography

English :

- Bhardwaja Chiranjiva, Dr. (tr.), *Light of Truth or An English Translation of the Satyarth Prakash*, 1906, 2nd ed., Allahabad, K.C. Bhalla.
- Birdwood, Lord , *The Akalis : Past and Present*, 1974, New Delhi, Ashajanak Publications.
- Buddhiraja, Arjan Singh, *Two Talks Between Sant Fateh Singh ji and Shri Lal Bahadur Shastri, The Prime Minister of India*, No date, Delhi State, Akali Dal.
- Ernest Trumpp, Dr., (tr.) *The Ādi Granth*, 2nd ed., 1970, New Delhi, Munshiram Manoharlal.
- Fakir Syed Waheeduddin, *The Real Ranjit Singh*, 1965, Karachi (Pakistan), Lion Art Press Ltd.
- Gauba, K.L., *Passive Voices*, 1973, Bombay, Thakar & Co. Ltd.
- Ghouse, Mohammad, *Secularism, Society and Law in India*, 1973, Delhi, Vikas Publishing House Pvt. Ltd.
- Glasner, Peter E., *The Sociology of Secularisation*, 1977, New Delhi, Ambika Publications.
- Gopal Singh, Dr. (tr.), *Sri Gurū Granth Sāhib*, Vol. I, 1960, Delhi, Gurdas Kapur and Sons.
- Grewal, J.S., & Indu Banga (ed.), *Civil and Military Affairs of Maharaja Ranjit Singh*, 1987, Amritsar, G.N.D.U.
- Gurnam Singh, *A Unilingual Punjabi State and The Sikh Unrest*, 1960, Published by the author.
- Harbhajan Singh, *Gems of Thoughts from Guru Nanak Bani*, 1971, Amritsar, S.G.P.C.
- Jehangir, Emperor, *Tuzk*.
- Kapur Singh, Sirdar, *Some Documents on the Demand for the Sikh-Homeland*, 1969, Chandigarh, President, All India Sikh Students Federation.

- Kapur Singh, Sirdar, *Four Speeches*, 1974, Calcutta, The Sikh Cultural Centre.
- , *Parasaraprasna* (ed. by Piar Singh and Madanjit Kaur), 1989, Amritsar, Guru Nanak Dev University.
- Keith, A.B., *A Constitutional History of India*, 1936, London, Methuen & Co., Ltd.
- Khushwant Singh, *Hymns of Guru Nanak*, 1969, New Delhi, Orient Longman's Ltd.
- Kohli, Surindar Singh, *A Critical Study of Adi Granth*, reprint 1976, Delhi, Motilal Banarasidass.
- Lee, Robert & Marty, Martin E. (eds.), *Religion and Social Conflict*, 1964, New York, Oxford University Press.
- Macauliffe, M.A., *The Sikh Religion*, Reprint, 1963, Vol. I, Delhi, S. Chand & Co.
- Madhok, Balraj, *Indian Nationalism*, Bharati Sahitya Sadan, 1969, New Delhi.
- Mann, Gurinder Singh, Dr., *The Goindval Pothis : The Earliest Extant Source of the Sikh Canon*, 1996, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Massachusetts.
- Martin, David, *The Religious and the Secular*, 1969, London, Routledge & Kegan Paul.
- Memorandum Presented to Shrimati Indira Gandhi, 1975, New Delhi, Chief Khalsa Diwan, Amritsar.
- Menon, Nalini (ed.), *The Khalsa - A Saga of Excellence*, 1999, New Delhi, Xavier Collaco for Media Transasia India Limited.
- Munshi, K.M., *Pilgrimage to Freedom*, 1967, Bombay, Bhartiya Vidya Bhavan.
- Narain Singh, *Roots of Hindu Sikh Unity*, 1979, Amritsar, All India Pingalwārā Society.
- Ravel Singh, *Punjabi Suba Demand*, 1966, Amritsar, Shiromaṇi Gurdwārā Prabandhak Committee.
- Rosenthal, Ethel, *The Story of Indian Music and its Instruments; a study of the present and a record of the past*, 1928, London, William Reeves Bookseller Ltd.
- Sarhadi, Ajit Singh, *Punjabi Suba*, 1979, Delhi, U.C. Kapur & Sons.
- Sohan Singh, *The Seeker's Path*, 1959, New Delhi, Orient Longmans Ltd.
- Talib, Gurbachan Singh, *Vinoba Bhave's Commentary on Japujee*, 1973, Patiala, Punjabi University.
- Teja Singh, *The Japji or Guru Nanak's Meditation*, 2nd ed., 1924, Amritsar, The Sikh Tract Society.
- , *The Growth of Responsibility in Sikhism*, 10th ed., 1983, Amritsar, S.G.P.C.
- Tinkar Hugh, *Foundations of Local Self-Government in India, Pakistan and Burma*, 1967, Bombay, Lalwani Publishing House.

- Trilochan Singh et al (tr.), *Selections from The Sacred Writings of the Sikhs*, 1960, London, George Allen & Unwin Ltd.
 Wazir Singh, *Aspects of Guru Nanak's Philosophy*, 1969, Ludhiana, Lahore Book Shop.
 Wilfred Cantwell Smith, *Modern Islam In India*, Lahore.

Hindi :

परमानंद, श्री जपु जी साहिब स्टीक, तीसरी छाप, 1872, लखनऊ, नवल किशोर प्रैस।

Panjabi :

- ਅਨੰਦ ਘਨ, ਗੁਰਬਾਣੀ ਟੀਕੇ (ਸੰਪਾ. ਰਤਨ ਸਿੰਘ ਜੱਗੀ), 1970, ਪਟਿਆਲਾ, ਭਾਸ਼ਾ ਵਿਭਾਗ, ਪੰਜਾਬ।
 ਅਸ਼ੋਕ, ਸ਼ਮਸ਼ੇਰ ਸਿੰਘ, ਸਾਡਾ ਹੱਥ-ਲਿਖਤ ਪੰਜਾਬੀ ਸਾਹਿਤ, 1968, ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤਸਰ, ਸ਼੍ਰੋ.ਗੁ.ਪ੍ਰ. ਕਮੇਟੀ।
 ਆਦਿ ਸ੍ਰੀ ਗੁਰੂ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਸਾਹਿਬ, 1977, ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤਸਰ, ਸ਼੍ਰੋ.ਗੁ.ਪ੍ਰ. ਕਮੇਟੀ।
 ਸਾਹਿਬ ਸਿੰਘ, ਪ੍ਰੋ., ਆਦਿ ਬੀੜ ਬਾਰੇ, 1970, ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤਸਰ, ਸਿੰਘ ਬ੍ਰਦਰਜ਼।
 —, ਗੁਰਬਾਣੀ ਵਿਆਕਰਣ, ਚੌਥੀ ਛਾਪ, 1970, ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤਸਰ, ਸਿੰਘ ਬ੍ਰਦਰਜ਼।
 —, ਸ੍ਰੀ ਗੁਰੂ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਦਰਪਣ, ਪਹਿਲੀ ਜਿਲਦ, 1965, ਜਲੰਧਰ, ਰਾਜ ਪਬਲਿਸ਼ਰਜ਼।
 ਸਤਿਬੀਰ ਸਿੰਘ, ਜਪੁ ਤੇ ਓਹਦੇ ਪੱਖ, 1971, ਜਲੰਧਰ, ਨਿਊ ਬੁੱਕ ਕੰਪਨੀ।
 ਸੁਤੇ ਪ੍ਰਕਾਸ਼, ਸੰਤ, ਪ੍ਰਯਾਣਿ ਆਦਿ ਸ੍ਰੀ ਗੁਰੂ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਜੀ, 429 ਨਾਨਕਸ਼ਾਹੀ/1898 ਈ., ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤਸਰ, ਵਜ਼ੀਰ ਹਿੰਦ ਪ੍ਰੈਸ।
 ਸੂਰੀ, ਨਿਹਾਲ ਸਿੰਘ, ਗੁਰਮਤਿ ਭਾਵ ਪ੍ਰਕਾਸ਼ਨੀ ਟੀਕਾ, 1930, ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤਸਰ, ਫੁਲਵਾੜੀ।
 ਸੋਢੀ, ਹਜ਼ਾਰਾ ਸਿੰਘ, ਜਪੁ ਬੀਚਾਰ, 1935, ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤਸਰ, ਲੇਖਕ।
 ਸੰਤੋਖ ਸਿੰਘ, ਭਾਈ, ਗਰਬ ਗੰਜਨੀ ਟੀਕਾ, 1886, ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤਸਰ, ਸਰੂਪ ਸਿੰਘ, ਗਿਆਨੀ।
 —, ਸ੍ਰੀ ਗੁਰ ਪ੍ਰਤਾਪ ਸੂਰਜ ਗ੍ਰੰਥਾਵਲੀ, (ਸੰਪਾ. ਵੀਰ ਸਿੰਘ, ਭਾਈ) ਭਾਗ ਪਹਿਲਾ, ਚੌਥੀ ਛਾਪ, 1927, ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤਸਰ, ਖਾਲਸਾ ਸਮਾਚਾਰ।
 —, ਨਾਨਕ ਪ੍ਰਕਾਸ਼ (ਸੰਪਾ. ਭਾਈ ਵੀਰ ਸਿੰਘ), 1928, ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤਸਰ।
 ਸੰਪੂਰਨ ਸ੍ਰੀ ਸਰਬਲੋਹ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਜੀ, ਬਿਨਾ ਸੰਮਤ, ਆਨੰਦਪੁਰ ਸਾਹਿਬ, ਬੁੱਢਾ ਦਲ ਪੰਜਵਾਂ ਤਖ਼ਤ ਪ੍ਰਿੰਟਿੰਗ ਪ੍ਰੈਸ, ਗੁਰੂ ਕਾ ਬਾਗ।
 ਸ੍ਰੀ ਦਸਮ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਸਾਹਿਬ, ਮਿਤੀ ਰਹਿਤ, ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤਸਰ, ਜਵਾਹਰ ਸਿੰਘ ਕ੍ਰਿਪਾਲ ਸਿੰਘ।
 ਹਰਿ ਜੀ, ਜਨਮ ਸਾਖੀ ਸ੍ਰੀ ਗੁਰੂ ਨਾਨਕ ਦੇਵ ਜੀ, ਸੈਂਚੀ ਦੂਜੀ, 1969, ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤਸਰ, ਖਾਲਸਾ ਕਾਲਜ।
 ਹਰਿਨਾਮ ਦਾਸ, ਸ਼੍ਰੀਮਤੀ, ਸ੍ਰੀ ਜਪੁ ਜੀ ਸਟੀਕ, 1972, ਕਪੂਰਥਲਾ, ਕਾਂਤੋਸ਼ ਆਯੁਰਵੈਦਿਕ ਫਾਰਮੇਸੀ।
 ਹੀਰਾ, ਭਗਤ ਸਿੰਘ, ਓ ਦਰਸ਼ਨ, 1977, ਨਵੀਂ ਦਿੱਲੀ, ਲੇਖਕ।
 ਕਪੂਰ ਸਿੰਘ, ਸਾਚੀ ਸਾਖੀ, 1972, ਜਲੰਧਰ, ਰਾਜ ਰੂਪ ਪ੍ਰਕਾਸ਼ਨ।
 ਕਰਤਾਰ ਸਿੰਘ, ਜਪੁ ਜੀ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਸਟੀਕ, 1958, ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤਸਰ, ਸ਼੍ਰੋ.ਗੁ.ਪ੍ਰ. ਕਮੇਟੀ।
 ਕਰਤਾਰ ਸਿੰਘ, ਪੰਡਿਤ (ਦਾਖਾ), ਸ੍ਰੀ ਜਪੁ-ਨਿਸ਼ਾਣ, 1951, ਲੁਧਿਆਣਾ, ਰਘਬੀਰ ਸਿੰਘ।
 ਕਾਨ੍ਹ ਸਿੰਘ, ਭਾਈ, ਗੁਰਮਤਿ ਮਾਰਤੰਡ, ਭਾਗ ਪਹਿਲਾ, 1962, ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤਸਰ, ਸ਼੍ਰੋ.ਗੁ.ਪ੍ਰ. ਕਮੇਟੀ।
 —, ਗੁਰਮਤਿ ਸੁਧਾਕਰ, ਤੀਜੀ ਐਡੀਸ਼ਨ, 1922, ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤਸਰ, ਗੁਰਮਤ ਪ੍ਰੈਸ।

- ਕਾਨ੍ਹ ਸਿੰਘ, ਭਾਈ, *ਗੁਰੂ ਸ਼ਬਦ ਰਤਨਾਕਰ ਮਹਾਨ ਕੋਸ਼*, ਦੂਜੀ ਛਾਪ, 1960, ਪਟਿਆਲਾ, ਭਾਸ਼ਾ ਵਿਭਾਗ।
- ਕ੍ਰਿਪਾਲ ਸਿੰਘ, ਗਿਆਨੀ, *ਸੰਪਰਦਾਇ ਟੀਕਾ ਆਦਿ ਸ੍ਰੀ ਗੁਰੂ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਜੀ*, ਚੌਥੀ ਛਾਪ, 1976, ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤਸਰ, ਭਾਈ ਜਵਾਹਰ ਸਿੰਘ ਕਿਰਪਾਲ ਸਿੰਘ ਐਂਡ ਕੰਪਨੀ।
- ਗਣੇਸ਼ ਸਿੰਘ, ਸੰਤ, *ਜਪੁ ਜੀ ਸਟੀਕ*, 1925, ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤਸਰ, ਬੁੱਧ ਸਿੰਘ ਐਂਡ ਸੰਨਜ਼।
- ਗਣੇਸ਼ ਦਾਸ, *ਫਤਿਹ ਨਾਮਾ ਗੁਰੂ ਖਾਲਸਾ ਜੀ ਕਾ*, (ਸੰਪਾ.) ਸੀਤਾ ਰਾਮ ਕੋਹਲੀ, 1952, ਪਟਿਆਲਾ, ਮਹਿਕਮਾ ਪੰਜਾਬੀ।
- ਗਿਆਨ ਸਿੰਘ, ਗਿਆਨੀ, *ਆਦਿ ਬਾਣੀ ਸ੍ਰੀ ਜਪੁ ਸਾਹਿਬ*, ਮਿਤੀ ਰਹਿਤ, ਲਾਹੌਰ, ਭਾਈ ਮਹਿਤਾਬ ਸਿੰਘ ਕਿਰਪਾਲ ਸਿੰਘ।
- ਗੁਰਦਿੱਤ ਸਿੰਘ, ਗਿਆਨੀ, *ਇਤਿਹਾਸ ਸ੍ਰੀ ਗੁਰੂ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਸਾਹਿਬ (ਭਗਤ ਬਾਣੀ ਭਾਗ)*, 1990, ਚੰਡੀਗੜ੍ਹ-ਦਿੱਲੀ, ਸਿੱਖ ਸਾਹਿੱਤ ਸੰਸਥਾਨ।
- ਗਲਹੋਤਰਾ, ਸੋਹਨ ਸਿੰਘ, *ਜਪੁ ਜੀ ਸੰਦੇਸ਼*, 1979, ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤਸਰ, ਸੀਤਲ ਸਾਹਿਤ ਭਵਨ।
- ਗੁਲਸ਼ਨ, ਧੰਨਾ ਸਿੰਘ, *ਅੱਜ ਦਾ ਪੰਜਾਬ ਤੇ ਸਿੱਖ ਰਾਜਨੀਤੀ*, 1978, ਰਾਮਪੁਰਾ ਫੂਲ, ਪਾਲੀਵਾਲ ਪਬਲਿਸ਼ਿੰਗ ਹਾਊਸ।
- ਗੁਰਬਖਸ਼ ਸਿੰਘ, *ਸ੍ਰੀ ਗੁਰੂ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਦੀਆਂ ਪ੍ਰਾਚੀਨ ਬੀੜਾਂ*, 1944, ਲਾਹੌਰ, ਮਾਡਰਨ ਪਬਲੀਕੇਸ਼ਨਜ਼।
- ਗੁਰਬਿਲਾਸ ਪਾਤਸ਼ਾਹੀ ਛੇਵੀਂ*, ਸੰਮਤ 1944/1887 ਈ. ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤਸਰ, ਗੁਰਦਿੱਤ ਸਿੰਘ ਚਾਨਣਾ।
- ਗੁਰਮੁਖ ਸਿੰਘ, ਪੰਡਿਤ, *ਸ੍ਰੀ ਗੁਰੂ ਨਾਨਕ ਸਿਧਾਂਤ ਦੀਪਿਕਾ*, 1839, ਮੁਲਤਾਨ, ਰਾਮ ਰੱਖਾ ਮਿਸਲਖਾਨ।
- ਗੁਲਾਬ ਸਿੰਘ, ਸੰਤ, *ਜਪੁ ਪ੍ਰਕਾਸ਼*, 1916, ਲਾਹੌਰ, ਲੇਖਕ।
- ਛਿੱਬਰ, ਕੇਸਰ ਸਿੰਘ, *ਬੰਸਾਵਲੀ ਨਾਮਾ ਦਸਾਂ ਪਾਤਸ਼ਾਹੀਆਂ ਕਾ*, (ਸੰਪਾ. ਰਤਨ ਸਿੰਘ ਜੱਗੀ) ਪਰਖ, ਦੂਜਾ ਭਾਗ, 1972, ਚੰਡੀਗੜ੍ਹ, ਪੰਜਾਬੀ ਯੂਨੀਵਰਸਿਟੀ।
- ਜੋਧ ਸਿੰਘ, ਭਾਈ, *ਟੀਕਾ ਜਪੁ ਜੀ ਸਾਹਿਬ*, 1911, ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤਸਰ, ਖਾਲਸਾ ਨੈਸ਼ਨਲ ਏਜੰਸੀ।
- , *ਸ੍ਰੀ ਕਰਤਾਰਪੁਰੀ ਬੀੜ ਦੇ ਦਰਸ਼ਨ*, 1968, ਪਟਿਆਲਾ, ਪੰਜਾਬੀ ਯੂਨੀਵਰਸਿਟੀ।
- ਤਾਰਨ ਸਿੰਘ, ਡਾ., *ਗੁਰੂ ਨਾਨਕ ਬਾਣੀ ਪ੍ਰਕਾਸ਼*, ਪਹਿਲੀ ਜਿਲਦ, 1969, ਪਟਿਆਲਾ, ਪੰਜਾਬੀ ਯੂਨੀਵਰਸਿਟੀ।
- ਤੇਜਾ ਸਿੰਘ, *ਸਤਿਗੁਰੂ ਨਾਨਕ ਦੇਵ ਦੀ ਬਾਣੀ ਜਪੁ ਜੀ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਦਾ ਟੀਕਾ*, 1925, ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤਸਰ, ਦਰਬਾਰ ਬੁੱਕ ਡਿਪੂ।
- , *ਸ਼ਬਦਾਂਤਕ ਲਗਾਂ ਮਾਤਰਾਂ ਦੇ ਗੁੱਝੇ ਭੇਦ*, 1969, ਲੁਧਿਆਣਾ, ਲਾਹੌਰ ਬੁੱਕ ਸ਼ਾਪ।
- ਤੇ ਹੋਰ, *ਸ਼ਬਦਾਰਥ*, ਭਾਗ ਪਹਿਲਾ, ਸੱਤਵੀਂ ਛਾਪ, ਮਿਤੀ ਰਹਿਤ, ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤਸਰ, ਸ਼੍ਰੋ.ਗੁ:ਪ੍ਰ. ਕਮੇਟੀ।
- ਦਸਮ ਪਾਤਸ਼ਾਹੀ ਕਾ ਗੁਰੂ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਸਾਹਿਬ*, 1895, ਲਾਹੌਰ, ਐਂਗਲੋ-ਸੰਸਕ੍ਰਿਤ ਪ੍ਰੈਸ।
- ਦੇਸਾ ਸਿੰਘ, *ਰਹਿਤਨਾਮਾ* (ਵੇਖੋ, ਪਿਆਰਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਪਦਮ ਵੱਲੋਂ ਸੰਪਾਦਿਤ *ਰਹਿਤਨਾਮੇ*, 1991, ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤਸਰ, ਭਾਈ ਚਤਰ ਸਿੰਘ ਜੀਵਨ ਸਿੰਘ, ਸਫੇ 146 ਤੋਂ 157 ਤੱਕ)
- ਦੀਵਾਨਾ, ਡਾ. ਮੋਹਨ ਸਿੰਘ ਉਬਰਾਇ, *ਪੰਜਾਬੀ ਭਾਖਾ ਵਿਗਿਆਨ ਅਤੇ ਗੁਰਮਤਿ ਗਿਆਨ*, 1952, ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤਸਰ, ਕਸਤੂਰੀ ਲਾਲ ਐਂਡ ਸੰਨਜ਼।
- ਧਰਮਾਨੰਤ ਸਿੰਘ, ਭਾਈ ਸਾਹਿਬ, *ਜਪੁ ਪਰਮਾਰਥ ਤੇ ਸਦਾ ਸੁਗਾਹ*, 1974, ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤਸਰ, ਲੇਖਕ।
- ਧੰਨਾ ਸਿੰਘ, *ਸ੍ਰੀ ਗੁਰੂ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਜੀ ਦੀ ਗੁਰਬਾਣੀ ਦਾ ਸ਼ੁੱਧ ਉਚਾਰਣ*, ਪਹਿਲੀ ਛਾਪ, 1966, ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤਸਰ।

- ਨਰੋਤਮ, ਤਾਰਾ ਸਿੰਘ, ਪੰਡਿਤ, *ਟੀਕਾ ਗੁਰਭਾਵ ਦੀਪਿਕਾ*, 1881, ਲਾਹੌਰ, ਦੀਵਾਨ ਬੂਟਾ ਸਿੰਘ।
- ਪ੍ਰੀਤਮ ਸਿੰਘ, ਪ੍ਰੋ., *ਅਹੀਆਪੁਰ ਵਾਲੀ ਪੋਥੀ*, ਭਾਗ ਪਹਿਲਾ, 1998, ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤਸਰ, ਗੁਰੂ ਨਾਨਕ ਦੇਵ ਯੂਨੀਵਰਸਿਟੀ।
- ਫਤਹਿ ਸਿੰਘ, ਸੰਤ, *ਅਭੁੱਲ ਯਾਦਾਂ*, 1962, ਗੁਰਦੁਆਰਾ ਬੁੱਢਾ ਜੋਹੜ, ਗੰਗਾਨਗਰ, ਸੰਤ ਚੇਨਣ ਸਿੰਘ, ਬੱਗਾ ਸਿੰਘ, ਰਾਜਸਥਾਨ।
- ਬਦਨ ਸਿੰਘ, ਗਿਆਨੀ ਤੇ ਹੋਰ, *ਆਦਿ ਸ੍ਰੀ ਗੁਰੂ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਜੀ ਸਟੀਕ*, ਭਾਗ ਪਹਿਲਾ, 1970, ਪਟਿਆਲਾ, ਭਾਸ਼ਾ ਵਿਭਾਗ, ਪੰਜਾਬ।
- ਬਲਬੀਰ ਸਿੰਘ, *ਨਿਰੁਕਤ ਸ੍ਰੀ ਗੁਰੂ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਸਾਹਿਬ*, ਪਹਿਲੀ ਜਿਲਦ, 1972, ਪਟਿਆਲਾ, ਪੰਜਾਬੀ ਯੂਨੀਵਰਸਿਟੀ।
- ਬਖਸ਼ੀਸ਼ ਸਿੰਘ, ਗਿਆਨੀ, *ਜਪੁ ਜੀ ਸਟੀਕ*, 1912, ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤਸਰ, ਭਾਈ ਸੰਤ ਸਿੰਘ ਨਕਸ਼ੇ ਨਵੀਸ।
- ਬਾਵਾ, ਹਰਿ ਪ੍ਰਕਾਸ਼, *ਸ੍ਰੀ ਬੋਧ-ਅਰਥਾਵਲੀ ਟੀਕਾ ਜਪੁ ਜੀ ਕਾ*, ਮਿਤੀ ਰਹਿਤ, ਰਾਵਲਪਿੰਡੀ, ਗੁਲਸ਼ਨ ਪ੍ਰੈਸ।
- ਬੁੱਧ ਸਿੰਘ, ਗਿਆਨੀ, *ਜਪੁ ਜੀ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਸਟੀਕ*, ਦੂਜੀ ਛਾਪ, 1950, ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤਸਰ, ਅਤਰ ਸਿੰਘ ਗੁਰਮੁਖ ਸਿੰਘ।
- ਭੱਲਾ, ਸਰੂਪ ਦਾਸ, *ਸ੍ਰੀ ਗੁਰੂ ਮਹਿਮਾ ਪ੍ਰਕਾਸ਼*, (ਸੰਪਾ. ਗੋਬਿੰਦ ਸਿੰਘ ਲਾਂਬਾ ਤੇ ਖਜ਼ਾਨ ਸਿੰਘ), ਦੂਜਾ ਭਾਗ, 1971, ਪਟਿਆਲਾ, ਭਾਸ਼ਾ ਵਿਭਾਗ, ਪੰਜਾਬ।
- ਰਣਧੀਰ ਸਿੰਘ (ਸੰਪਾ.), *ਪ੍ਰੇਮ ਸੁਮਾਰਗ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ*, 1953, ਜਲੰਧਰ, ਨਿਊ ਬੁੱਕ ਕੰਪਨੀ।
- ਰਣਧੀਰ ਸਿੰਘ, ਭਾਈ, *ਸ਼ਬਦਾਰਥ ਦਸਮ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਸਾਹਿਬ*, ਪਹਿਲੀ ਜਿਲਦ, 1973, ਪਟਿਆਲਾ, ਪੰਜਾਬੀ ਯੂਨੀਵਰਸਿਟੀ।
- ਰਾਮੁਵਾਲੀਆ, ਬਲਵੰਤ ਸਿੰਘ, *ਪੰਜਾਬ ਦੀ ਪੌਣ ਉੱਤੇ ਤਲਵਾਰ*, 1972, ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤਸਰ, ਸ਼੍ਰੋਮਣੀ ਅਕਾਲੀ ਦਲ।
- ਵਹੀਰੀਆ, ਅਵਤਾਰ ਸਿੰਘ, *ਗੁਰੂ ਢੋਢੋਰਾ*, ਮਿਤੀ ਰਹਿਤ, ਲਾਹੌਰ, ਗੁਰਮਤਿ ਪ੍ਰੈਸ।
- ਵੀਰ ਸਿੰਘ, ਭਾਈ, *ਸੰਥਾ ਸ੍ਰੀ ਗੁਰੂ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਸਾਹਿਬ*, ਭਾਗ ਪਹਿਲਾ, 1958, ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤਸਰ, ਖਾਲਸਾ ਸਮਾਚਾਰ।
- ਸ਼ਿਵਦਿਆਲ ਸਿੰਘ ਉਰਫ਼ ਪੰਨਾ ਲਾਲ ਖੱਤਰੀ, *ਜਪੁ ਜੀ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਸਟੀਕ*, ਮਿਤੀ ਰਹਿਤ, ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤਸਰ, ਭਾਈ ਚਤਰ ਸਿੰਘ ਜੀਵਨ ਸਿੰਘ।
- ਸ਼ੇਰ ਸਿੰਘ, ਗਿਆਨੀ, *ਟੀਕਾ ਸ੍ਰੀ ਜਪੁ ਸਾਹਿਬ*, ਮਿਤੀ ਰਹਿਤ, ਪਿਸ਼ਾਵਰ, ਕੋਰੋਨੇਸ਼ਨ ਪ੍ਰੈਸ।
- ਸ਼ੇਰ ਸਿੰਘ, ਡਾ., *ਜਪੁ ਜੀ ਦਰਸ਼ਨ*, 1969, ਲੁਧਿਆਣਾ, ਲਾਹੌਰ ਬੁੱਕ ਸ਼ਾਪ।
- ਸ਼੍ਰੋਮਣੀ ਅਕਾਲੀ ਦਲ ਦਾ ਨਵਾਂ ਪਾਲਿਸੀ ਪ੍ਰੋਗਰਾਮ, 1974, ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤਸਰ, ਗਿਆਨੀ ਅਜਮੇਰ ਸਿੰਘ, ਸਕੱਤਰ, ਯੂਥ ਅਕਾਲੀ ਦਲ।

Persian :

- Dabistān-i-Mazāhib*, 1904, Kanpur, Munshi Nawal Kishore.
- Gobind Singh, Guru, *Zafarnāmā*.
- Ganda Singh (ed.), *Nur Mohd's Jang Nāmāh*, 1939, Amritsar, Khalsa College.

Urdu :

Hari Singh, Gurmukh, *Rahnumā-i-Didār-i-Haqq*, Part 1, 1935, Lahore, Dewan Printing Press.

Muhammad Iqbal, Sir, *Jāved Nāmāh*.

Journals :

English :

Journal of Sikh Studies, Feb. 1974, Amritsar, G.N.D.U.

—February, 1977, Vol. IV, No. 1.

—February, 1978, Vol. V. No. 1.

The Sikh Review, August, 1971, Kolkata; February, 1983, Vol. XXX, No. 350; Nov. 1983, Vol. C XXI, No. 359 ; Feb. 1988.

Punjabi :

ਗੁਰਮਤਿ ਪ੍ਰਕਾਸ਼, ਜੁਲਾਈ 1973, ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤਸਰ; ਮਾਰਚ 1974, ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤਸਰ।

Manuscripts :

Punjabi :

ਹਰੀ ਦਾਸ, ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਹਰੀਆ ਜੀ ਕਾ, ਸੰਮਤ 1792/1735 ਈਸਵੀ, (ਲੇਖਕ ਦੀ ਨਿੱਜੀ ਲਾਇਬ੍ਰੇਰੀ)।

ਜਵਾਹਰ ਸਿੰਘ, ਭਾਈ ਬੰਨੋ ਪ੍ਰਕਾਸ਼, 1872, ਨੰਬਰ ਜੀ-76, ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤਸਰ, ਭਾਈ ਗੁਰਦਾਸ ਲਾਇਬ੍ਰੇਰੀ,

ਗੁਰੂ ਨਾਨਕ ਦੇਵ ਯੂਨੀਵਰਸਿਟੀ।

ਭਾਈ ਦਰਬਾਰੀ, ਪੋਥੀ ਹਰਿਜਸ, 1803, ਪਿੰਡ ਵੈਰੋ ਕੇ, ਜ਼ਿਲ੍ਹਾ ਫ਼ਰੀਦਕੋਟ।

Newspaper :

English :

The Spokesman Weekly, May 15, 1978, New Delhi.

Index

- Abdali, Ahmad Shah 144
 Abdus Salam 225
 Abu Rihan Al-beruni 76
 Abul Fazl 169
 Adli, Adil Shah 169
 Ahiyapur 98
 Ahluwalia, Dr. Jasbir Singh 47, 55
 Aimanabad 125
 Ajit Singh 252
 Ajmer Singh, Giani 212^{fn}, 218^{fn}
 Akāl Takhr 189, 202, 229, 231
 Alghazzali, Imam 162
 Amar Das, Guru 66, 70, 88, 98, 101, 104, 106, 140, 177, 243, 245
 Amar Singh, Sardar 155
 Amritsar (previously Ramdaspur) 9, 37^{fn}, 47, 67, 78^{fn}, 80, 81, 100, 107^{fn}, 110, 114, 121, 128^{fn}, 149^{fn}, 157, 175, 179, 189, 193, 194, 205^{fn}, 206^{fn}, 210, 212^{fn}, 218^{fn}, 230, 233, 240^{fn}, 243^{fn}, 244^{fn}, 245, 250^{fn}
 Anad Ghan 56, 58
 Anandpur 124, 129, 212^{fn}, 218^{fn}, 239
 Angad, Guru 70, 243
 Arjan Dev, Guru 65, 66, 69, 70, 78, 78^{fn}, 79, 80, 82, 83, 84, 87, 88, 89, 90, 95, 97, 98, 99, 100, 102, 103, 105, 106, 110, 115, 163, 165, 168, 170, 175, 177, 208, 221, 223, 243, 245-247
 Aryan India 75
 Aurangzeb 124, 209
 Aurnagiri Nathar 61
 Bābā Aṭal 189
 Bābā Buḍḍhā 67
 Babar 63, 125, 178
 Babu Kesab Candra Sen 251
 Badan Singh, Giani 38^{fn}, 41, 56, 59^{fn}
 Baiju Bawara 169
 Bakhshesh Singh, Giani 41
 Balbir Singh 194
 Balbir Singh, Dr. 41, 168
 Baluchistan 73
 Balwand 70, 163, 168
 Balya 70
 Banda Singh 248
 Bangalore 182
 Banno, Bhai 78, 80, 81, 95
 Bannoāniā, Bishan Singh 87^{fn}
 Bannoāniā, Jagat Singh, Bhai 81
 Baramula 182
 Baraut 81
 Batala 195
 Bengal 70
 Beni 70
 Bhagi 155
 Bhai Vir Singh Sahitya Sadan 121
 Bhalla, Sarup Das 99
 Bhalya 70
 Bhani, Bibi 66

- Bharadwaja, Dr. Chiranjiva 52^{fn}
 Bhatinda 75
 Bhikha 70
 Bhikhan 70
 Bhilai 182
 Bhiwandi 27
 Bhuntar 182
 Bidar 128
 Bindraban, Misr 156
 Birdwood, Lord 212^{fn}
 Bishan Singh 93^{fn}
 Bombay 138, 205^{fn}, 210^{fn}
 Bose, Subhash Chandra 30
 Brahma 17
 Brelvi, Syed Ahmad 150
 Brihaspati, Dr. 170
 British Columbia University 119
 Bryant, Dr. 119
 Buddha 30, 62
 Buddhiraja, Arjan Singh 215^{fn}
 Budh Singh, Giani 43, 53
 Burns, H.P. 80^{fn}

 Calcutta 185, 213^{fn}, 214^{fn}
 see also Kolkatta
 Caliph Umar 74
 Callewaert, W.M., Dr. 120, 122, 123
 Carey, William, Dr. 184
 Chaitanya (Bengali saint) 170
 Chanan Singh, Bagga Singh, Sant 215^{fn}
 Chand, Bhai 169
 Chandigarh 11^{fn}, 98, 121, 124^{fn}, 143^{fn},
 188, 194, 205^{fn}, 215^{fn}, 217^{fn},
 233^{fn}
 Chatterji, J.M. 16
 Chaubey, B.B., Dr. 56
 Chhabra, B. C., Dr. 189, 190
 Chhibber, Kesar Singh 65

 Daakhaa 46

 Dalip Singh 252
 Darbari, Bhai 75
 Daya Ram 128
 Dayal Ji, Baba 143-147
 Dehradun 98^{fn}, 121
 Delhi 22, 124, 151, 177, 185, 194,
 205^{fn}, 206^{fn}, 215^{fn}, 239
 Delhi Gurdwārā Prabandhak Commit-
 tee 121, 194
 Derā Sāhib 158
 Desa Singh, Bhai 136
 Dewana, Mohan Singh, Dr. 70
 Dhanna 70, 79^{fn}
 Dhanna Singh, Sardar 115
 Dharam Das 128, 130
 Dhariwal 49
 Dharmanant Singh, Bhai Sahib 47, 50
 Dheermall 79
 Diala, Bhai 239
 Diwan Singh 156
 Domelian 157
 Duni Chand 32, 33
 Durrani, Ahmad Shah 250, 251
 Dwarka 128

 Einstein 225
 Elliot, H.M., Sir 80^{fn}
 England 189

 Faqir Nuruddin 155
 Farid 79^{fn}, 175
 Faridkot 75
 Fateh Singh, Sant 215^{fn}
 Fazl Dad Khan 157
 France 182, 189

 Galhotra, Sohan Singh 57
 Ganda Singh, Dr. 155, 194, 241^{fn},
 246^{fn}, 250^{fn}
 Gandhi, Indira 22, 205^{fn}

- Gandhi, Mahatma 30, 131, 213^{fn}
 Ganesh Das 150
 Ganesha Singh, Sant 43, 49^{fn}
 Ganga Nagar 216^{fn}
 Ganges, river 31
 Gangsar 253
 Gauba, K.L. 205^{fn}
 Gayand 70
 Gian Singh, Giani 49^{fn}, 55, 57, 59^{fn}, 184
 Glasner, Peter E. 217^{fn}
 Gobind Singh, Guru 65, 66, 69, 78^{fn}, 84, 124, 125, 126, 127, 128, 129, 130, 131, 159, 163, 164, 174, 175, 177, 181, 191, 208, 209, 215, 221, 225, 226, 227, 233, 236, 238, 239, 240, 242, 243, 245, 247, 248
 Goindwal 39, 98, 193, 246
 Golden Temple 179, 189, 235, 246
 see also Harimandir Sahib
 Golwalkar 206^{fn}
 Gopal 169
 Gopal Dev (Udāsi Mahant) 49
 Gopal Singh, Dr. 40, 40^{fn}, 47, 55, 57^{fn}, 58, 194
 Gujjar Singh, Sardar 157
 Gulab Singh, Sant 53, 57
 Gulati, Kailash Chandar 212^{fn}
 Gulshan, Dhanna Singh 212^{fn}
 Gurdas, Bhai 48, 60, 66, 67, 76, 79, 101, 102, 106, 135, 136, 140, 171, 244, 246
 Gurdit Singh, Giani 94, 99, 100
 Gurmukh, Hari Singh 53
 Gurmukh Singh, Pandit 43, 49, 50
 Gurnam Singh, Sardar 167, 213^{fn}
 Guru Ka Bagh 253
 Gwalior 169
 Hans Ram 126
 Har Ji 58, 66
 Har Rai, Guru 240, 243
 Harbans 70
 Harbans Singh 194
 Harbhajan Singh 47, 50
 Hargobind, Guru 83, 84, 85, 130, 208, 240, 243
 Hari Krishan, Guru 243
 Hari Prakash, Bawa 44, 47, 56
 Haria or Hari Das 75, 170
 Haridas 169
 Haridwar 31
 Harimandir Sahib 67, 120, 169, 175, 189, 246
 see also Golden Temple
 Harmandar Singh 94, 94^{fn}
 Harnam Das, Swami 40, 42, 50, 52, 53^{fn}, 54, 56
 Harvinder Singh 10
 Haryana 205^{fn}
 Hastinapur 128
 Himachal 205^{fn}
 Himmat 128
 Hira, Bhagat Singh 46, 54
 Hukam Singh 206^{fn}
 India 22, 23, 61, 63, 64, 206^{fn}, 207, 212, 214, 214^{fn}, 229
 Indian National Congress 212
 Jagannath Puri 128
 Jaggi, Ratan Singh 56^{fn}
 Jaideva 70, 78^{fn}, 79^{fn}, 87^{fn}
 Jaito 253
 Jalandhar/Jullundur 39, 79, 98, 207, 213^{fn}
 Jalap 70
 Jamboji Maharaj 61
 Jammu & Kashmir 205^{fn}

- Jana Sangh 219
 Jaunpur 169
 Jaya Deva 170
 Jehangir 208, 246
 Jetha, Bhai 101
 Jodh Singh, Bhai 48, 79, 79^{fn}, 81, 91, 194
 Joga Singh, Bhai 144
 John S. Hawley, Dr. 118

 Kabir 30, 61, 69, 70, 86, 79^{fn}, 104, 106, 175
 K'aba 32
 Kabul 151, 178, 241
 Kahn Singh 48
 Kahn Singh, Bhai 42^{fn}, 109, 110, 139, 184
 Kal or Kalas-har 70
 Kalar 250
 Kanahayya, Bhai 233
 Kanpur 81, 95, 182
 Kapur Singh 57^{fn}, 194, 206^{fn}, 213^{fn}, 214^{fn}, 217^{fn}
 Kapur Singh, Sirdar, (Bhai Sahib) 40, 44, 46, 47, 51, 53, 54, 55
 Karnataka 169
 Kartar Singh 43, 50
 Kartar Singh, Giani 190
 Kartar Singh, Pandit 46, 47^{fn}
 Kartarpur 79, 96, 242
 Kashi 70, 76
 Kashmir 73, 76
 Keith, A.B. 210^{fn}
 Kenneth E. Bryant, Dr. 118
 Khārā Māṅgaṭ 80, 81, 95
 Kharak Singh, Baba 213^{fn}
 Kharak Singh, Kanwar 156
 Khotewāl 158
 Khushwant Singh 54, 55, 58
 Kirat 70
 Kirpal Singh, Bhai 120
 Kirpal Singh, Giani 51, 55
 Kirpal Singh, Sant 59^{fn}
 Kohli, Surindar Singh 50
 Kolkata 16, 30^{fn}, 155^{fn}, 182, 182^{fn}
 see also Calcutta
 Krishnadeva Rai 169

 Lahore 80, 80^{fn}, 128, 144, 194, 209, 210^{fn}, 213^{fn}, 235, 248^{fn}, 249
 Lakshami Narayana 170
 Lamma, Gurmukh Singh 157
 Lath, Dr. Mukund 118, 120
 Lehṇā, Bhai 242
 London 217^{fn}
 Los Angeles 185
 Ludhiana 189, 194

 Mān, Dr. Jasbir Singh 98^{fn}
 Macauliffe, M.A. 47, 50
 Maharashtra 70, 79^{fn}
 Mann, Dr. Gurinder Singh 99
 Manohar Das 66
 Marco, Manohar Singh 94, 94^{fn}
 Mardana 25, 70, 168
 Maretin, David 217^{fn}
 Masi Kharn 169
 Mastan Singh, Bhai 81
 Mathura 70
 Mati Das, Bhai 239
 McBride, Dr. Sean 198
 McLeod, W.H. 99, 248
 Mecca 32
 Meharban 39
 Merath 81
 Mian Taha 169
 Mian Mir 155
 Mian Mir, Hazrat 179
 Mirabai 87
 Mohammad 170

- Mohan, Baba 100-103
 Mohan Singh, Dr. 44^{fn}, 55
 Mohan Singh Vaid, Bhai 107, 108
 Mohkam Chand 128
 Mohsin Fani 130
 Muhammad Iqbal, Sir 64, 74
 Muinul-Mulk (nicknamed Mannu) 249-50
 Multan 25, 35, 150
 Muni, Swami Arjan Singh 107
 Munshi, K.M. 210^{fn}

 Nadir Shah 251
 Nalya 70
 Nāmdev, Bhagat 70, 79^{fn}, 106, 119
 Nanak, Guru 11, 13-15, 17, 20, 22, 23-25, 27-29, 31-38, 40, 45, 48, 51, 52, 60-64, 66-71, 73-75, 77, 90, 98, 102, 104-106, 124, 130, 135, 139-144, 160, 162, 163, 165, 167, 169-171, 174, 176-180, 190, 199, 207, 208, 221, 225, 226, 236, 241-244, 245, 248, 251
 Nand Lal, Bhai 227
 Nankana Sahib 253
 Narada 173
 Narain Singh 236, 240^{fn}, 243^{fn}
 Narottam, Pandit Tara Singh 40, 45, 46, 59^{fn}, 184
 Nasir Khan, Mir 250
 Needhan/Nidhan Singh, Bhai 80, 80^{fn}
 Nehru, Jawaharlal 198
 Nehru, Pandit Moti Lal 213^{fn}
 New Delhi 65^{fn}, 82, 121, 174^{fn}, 212^{fn}, 217^{fn}
 New York 185, 218^{fn}
 Niranjana Singh 194
 Nirañkāri, Dr. Man Singh 143
 Nirmalā, Bakhshish Singh 48
 North Western Frontier Province 73
 Nur Muhammad, Qazi 250
 Nurud-Din 169

 Pakistan 70, 81, 125, 143, 184, 212, 213, 227
 Panchkula (Haryana) 39
 Panna Lal Khatri 53
 Parbati, goddess 17
 Parmanand, Swami 47, 49, 49^{fn}, 51, 56, 58, 70
 Patiala 188, 194, 221^{fn}, 241^{fn}
 Peshawar 144
 Phula Singh, Akali 149
 Piar Singh 244^{fn}
 Pinjore 98
 Pipā 70, 79^{fn}
 Prithi Chand 66
 Punjab 64, 74, 76, 80^{fn}, 193, 194, 211, 214, 219, 224, 229, 230, 233, 241, 250, 253
 Puran Singh 194
 Puran Singh, Bhagat 233, 236
 Purandhar Das 169

 Qaumi Press 107, 108, 109

 Rae Bulaar 14
 Rajasthan 70, 205^{fn}, 216^{fn}
 Ram Das, Guru 66, 70, 101, 102, 105, 139, 243, 245
 Ram Singh, Baba 245
 Ram Singh, Bhai 80, 80^{fn}
 Ram Singh, Bhayya 157
 Rāmānanda 70, 79^{fn}
 Ramji Das 235
 Rampura Phul 212^{fn}
 Ramsar 67
 Ramuwalla, Balwant Singh 205^{fn}
 Randhir Singh, Bhai 119, 126^{fn}

- Ranjit Singh, Maharaja 80, 144, 149, 151, 209, 224, 227, 229, 252
- Rashtriya Swayam-Sewak Sangh (R.S.S.) 219
- Ravel Singh 205^{fn}
- Ravidas 70, 79^{fn}, 87^{fn}, 175
- Rawalpindi 144
- Reist, Benjamin A. 218^{fn}
- Rupert Snell, Dr. 119
- Russia 189
- S.G.P.C. (Shiromaṇi Gurdwārā Prabandhak Committee) 96, 97, 99, 107-109, 114, 115, 120, 121, 183-85, 186, 190, 193-95, 201, 203, 205^{fn}, 206^{fn}, 212, 214, 243^{fn}
- Sachdeva, Ranbir Singh, Er. 10
- Sada Sewak 104
- Sadhnā 70, 79^{fn}, 175
- Sahib Chand 128
- Sahib Kaur, Mātā 129, 175
- Sahib Singh, Prof. 38^{fn}, 42^{fn}, 47, 50 51, 54, 58, 95, 95^{fn}, 100, 105, 194
- Sain 70, 79^{fn}
- Sain Ditta, Bhai 169
- Salya 70
- Sangat Singh, Raja 156
- Santokh Singh, Bhai 44, 45^{fn}, 46, 54, 59^{fn}, 99, 137, 184
- Saraf 104
- Saral, Niranjana Singh 46^{fn}
- Sardar Parel 206^{fn}
- Sarhadi, Ajit Singh 215^{fn}
- Satbir Singh 59^{fn}
- Sati Das, Bhai 239
- Satta 70, 163, 168
- Savarkar, V.D. 206^{fn}
- Sewa Singh 119, 157
- Sewak, S.N., Dr. 10
- Shah Muhammad 150
- Shaikh Ilahi Bakhsh, Colonel 158
- Sharqi, Hussain Shah 169
- Shankaracharya 162
- Sheikh/Sekh Farid 70, 78^{fn}, 163
- Sheikh Ghuran 169
- Sheo Prasad 155
- Sher Singh, Dr. 46, 50, 51, 54
- Sher Singh, Giani 43, 50, 53
- Shiromaṇi Akālī Dal (S.A.D.) 201, 203, 206^{fn}, 212, 214, 215^{fn}, 216, 218^{fn}, 219
- Shiva 17
- Shivdayal Singh 53
- Shree Chand, Baba 143
- Sialkot 253
- Sindh 73
- Siri Chand, Baba 160^{fn}
- Sodhi, Amarjit Singh 79
- Sodhi, Hazara Singh 54, 55, 56, 57
- Sohan Singh 42, 43, 47, 51, 54, 55
- South Africa 202
- Sundar 70, 78^{fn}, 163
- Surat Singh 83
- Sūrdās 70, 88, 119, 169
- Suri, Nihal Singh 43, 48, 58
- Sutey Prakāsh, Sant 44, 44^{fn}
- Tak, R.S. 10
- Talib, Gurbachan Singh 40^{fn}, 194
- Talwandi (Rai Bhoi) 32
- Talwara, Bhai Joginder Singh 119
- Tan Sain 169
- Tara Singh 194
- Taran Singh, Dr. 47, 188, 194
- Tashkent 27
- Tegh Bahadur, Guru 65, 69, 70, 78^{fn}, 79, 93, 96, 124, 177, 200, 208, 233, 239, 243
- Tehal Singh, Nihang 119
- Tej Singh 157

- Teja Singh, Bhai 235
 Teja Singh, Prof. 38^{fn}, 42^{fn}, 47, 53, 55, 57, 194, 242, 243^{fn}
 Tinkar, Hug 210^{fn}
 Tohra, Jathedar Gurcharan Singh 99
 Tomar, Man Singh, Raja 169
 Toronto 185
 Toth, Karoly, Dr. 198
 Trilochan 70
 Trilochan Singh 40^{fn}
 Trilokpuri 27
 Trumpp, Dr. Ernest 41, 49, 50, 55, 56, 58
 U.K. 182
 U.S.A. 15^{fn}, 182, 189
 U.S.S.R. 182, 198
 Uberoi, Mohan Singh, Dr. 40, 46, 47, 51, 57^{fn}
 Ucch 169
 Vahiria, Avtar Singh 53
 Vairoke 75
 Vancouver 119, 185
 Vaswani, Sadhu 167
 Vedanti, Joginder Singh 119
 Vijay Nagar 169
 Vinoba Bhawe, Shri 40, 52
 Vir Singh, Bhai 40, 47, 58, 137, 184, 197
 Vishnu, Lord 45, 173
 Waheeduddin, Mr. 155
 Wanti 155
 Waris Shah 136
 Wazir Singh, Dr. 53, 54
 West Germany 78^{fn}, 238^{fn}
 Western Panjab 79^{fn}
 Wilfred Cantwell Smith 210^{fn}
 Winand M. Callewaert, Dr. 118
 Yamuna 75
 Yuba City 185